

Spring, 2001
THE AMERICAN SCHOOL
 1692-2000

The Great Civil Rights Movement and the New Culture Wars

Extending from the 1940s into the 1990s, the great civil rights movement was a continuation of the culture wars initiated by English colonists when they invaded Native American lands in North America. From the time of the invasion to the 1990s, many citizens tried to make sure that Protestant Anglo-American culture would be the dominant culture of the United States. For instance, in the 1990s, historian Arthur Schlesinger, who opposed multicultural education in public schools and advocated the teaching of Protestant Anglo-American culture, wrote, "For better or worse, the white Anglo-Saxon Protestant tradition was for two centuries—and in crucial respects still is—the dominant influence on American culture and society."¹

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, those believing the United States should be united by a Protestant Anglo-American culture advocated the "civilization" and deculturalization of Native Americans, Hispanic/Latinos, and Jewish and Catholic immigrants from southern and eastern Europe. Some citizens believed in the racial superiority of whites, and this belief resulted in the segregation of African Americans, Native Americans, Hispanic/Latino Americans, and Asian Americans. In the early twentieth century, believers in the racial superiority of whites, particularly whites from England and Germany, used standardized testing to provide validity to their views.

The great civil rights movement was composed of dominated groups who protested that domination—by Protestant Anglo-American culture. Activists among Native Americans, African Americans, Hispanic/Latino Americans, and Asian Americans demanded restoration and recognition of their cultures. Many of these activists rejected the idea of a single dominating culture in favor of a pluralistic society with many cultures given recognition in the public schools. Besides demands for cultural pluralism, activists demanded the end of school segregation and the end of racism in educational practices.

Leading the way in the civil rights movement were members of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), who fought segregation in schools and public facilities, and the lack of opportunity to participate in the American economic system. In addition, they demanded that public schools recognize African American culture. The actions of African Americans contributed to the militancy of other groups in demanding equality of educational opportunity and recognition of their cultures in public schools.

Native Americans campaigned for self-determination and cultural recognition. Mexican Americans continued their struggles against segregation and sought preservation of Mexican culture and the Spanish language in the schools. By the 1960s, Puerto Ricans joined Mexican Americans in supporting bilingual education.

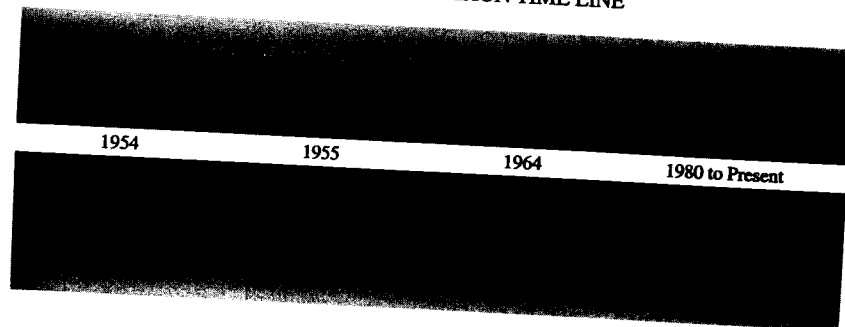
Thus, the civil rights movement opened the door to demands that the public schools reflect minority cultures. These demands, in turn, gave impetus to the 1980s–1990s movement for multicultural education.

SCHOOL DESEGREGATION

The desegregation of American schools was the result of over a half century of struggle by the African and Hispano/Latino communities. Since its founding in the early part of the twentieth century, the NAACP had struggled to end discriminatory practices against minority groups. The school desegregation issue was finally decided by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1954 in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*. The decision did not bring immediate results, because of resistance to court-ordered desegregation. The frustration caused by the slow pace of school integration and the continuation of other forms of discrimination contributed to the growth of a massive civil rights movement in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The response of national political leaders to the civil rights movement was the enactment of strong civil rights legislation.

It is important to remember that school desegregation and civil rights legislation were not the products of a benign government but were the result of tremendous

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struggle and public demonstrations. Politically, African Americans were forced by their lack of power at local and state levels to seek redress for their grievances from the federal government. National leaders tried to avoid dealing with civil rights issues but were finally forced by public demonstrations to take action. With regard to schooling, federal action resulted in greater federal control of local schools and a feeling among school board members that local control of education was rapidly disappearing.

The key legal issue in the struggle for desegregation was the interpretation of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution. This constitutional amendment was ratified in 1868, shortly after the close of the Civil War. One of its purposes was to extend the basic guarantees of the Bill of Rights into the areas under state and local government control. The most important and controversial section of the Fourteenth Amendment states, "No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens . . . nor . . . deprive any

African American students return to Clinton High School, Clinton, Tennessee. African American students are shown arriving at Clinton High School, as white students line school steps. After the African American students entered the building a United States Marshal proclaimed from the steps that a Federal Court injunction against interfering with integration at the school now applies to all residents of Clinton and Anderson counties. © *Brown Brothers*.



person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

The overturning of the separate but equal doctrine and a broader application of the Fourteenth Amendment came in 1954 in the historic and controversial Supreme Court decision *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*. *Brown* was one of five school segregation suits to reach the Supreme Court in 1953. It became the first case simply because the five cases were heard in alphabetical order. The *Brown* case began in 1951, when Oliver Brown and twelve other parents represented by NAACP lawyers brought suit to void a Kansas law that permitted but did not require local segregation of the schools. In this particular case, Oliver Brown's daughter was denied the right to attend a white elementary school within five blocks of her home and forced to cross railroad tracks and travel twenty-one blocks to attend an all-black school. The federal district court in Kansas ruled against Oliver Brown, using the argument that the segregated schools named in the suit were substantially equal and thus fell within the separate but equal doctrine.

In preparing its brief for the Supreme Court, the NAACP defined two important objectives: (1) to show that the climate of the times required an end to segregation laws, and (2) to show that the separate but equal doctrine contained a contradiction in terms—that is, that separate facilities were inherently unequal. To prove that separate facilities were inherently unequal, the NAACP presented new findings from the social sciences. These findings provided the basis for overturning the separate but equal doctrine. Opponents of the decision complained that the Supreme Court was making decisions using nonlegal arguments based on social science research. Throughout the South, it was widely believed that the Court was being persuaded by communist-oriented social scientists. Billboards appeared on highways demanding the impeachment of Chief Justice Earl Warren for subverting the Constitution.

The Supreme Court argued in the *Brown* decision, "In the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal." To support this argument, the Supreme Court wrote one of the most controversial single sentences ever to appear in a Court decision: "Whatever may have been the extent of psychological knowledge at the time of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, this finding is amply supported by modern authority."²

In 1955, the Supreme Court issued its enforcement decree for the desegregation of schools. One problem facing the Court was the lack of machinery for supervising and ensuring the desegregation of vast numbers of segregated school districts. The Court resolved this problem by relying on federal district courts to determine the equitable principles for desegregation. Federal judges were often part of the social fabric of their local communities and resisted attempts at speedy desegregation. Consequently, integration occurred at a slow pace until additional civil rights legislation was passed in the 1960s and the mounting frustrations in the community fed the flames of a militant civil rights movement.³

The proliferation of the mass media in the 1950s was an important factor in the desegregation movement because it became possible to turn local problems into national ones. Although presidents had traditionally shown a great deal of reluctance to challenge the southern political structure, the emergence of the

mass media as a powerful force allowed both the federal government and civil rights groups to put unprecedented pressure on southern political leaders, forcing them to comply with national civil rights legislation. In fact, enforcement of the Supreme Court school desegregation ruling depended in large part on civil rights groups making effective use of television. In one sense, the struggle that took place was a struggle between public images. Concern over America's international image grew as pictures of racial injustice flashed around the world, and the president's public image was often threatened when examples of racial injustice were shown to millions of television viewers and the question was asked, What is our president doing about this situation?

The most dramatic technique used by civil rights groups was nonviolent confrontation. The massive nonviolent demonstration by blacks and whites were met by cursing southern law enforcement units using an array of cattle prods, clubs, and fire hoses. These scenes were broadcast on television around the world. The Congress on Racial Equality (CORE), the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), led by the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., forced the passage of national civil rights legislation.

THE REVEREND DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

The introduction of nonviolent confrontation into the civil rights movement came from the Christian student movement of the 1930s, which, under the leadership of the Fellowship for Reconciliation, was committed to use of the Gandhian technique of *satyagraha* (nonviolent direct action) in solving racial and industrial problems in the United States. CORE, a major organization in the civil rights movement, was organized at the University of Chicago in 1942. The two basic doctrines of the early CORE movement were commitment to racial integration and the use of Christian nonviolent techniques.

CORE did not rise to national prominence until the late 1950s, when another Christian leader, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., made nonviolent confrontation the central drama of the civil rights movement. King was born in 1929 in Atlanta, Georgia, into a family of Baptist ministers. His maternal grandfather founded the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, and his father made the church into one of the largest and most prestigious Baptist churches in the area. In 1944, King entered Atlanta's Morehouse College, where he was influenced by his reading of Henry David Thoreau's *Essay on Civil Disobedience*. He later wrote about the essay, "Fascinated by the idea of refusing to cooperate with an evil system, I was so deeply moved that I reread the work several times. This was my first intellectual contact with the theory of non-violent resistance."⁴

In 1948, King entered Crozier Theological Seminary in Chester, Pennsylvania, where for the first time he became acquainted with pacifism, through a lecture by A. J. Muste. King wrote that at the time he considered Muste's pacifist doctrine impractical in a world confronted by the armies of totalitarian nations.

Also of importance to King's intellectual development was his exposure to the social gospel philosophy of Walter Rauschenbusch, a philosophy which actively involved the Church in social reform as a means of creating a kingdom of God on earth. Although he rejected the optimistic elements in the social gospel, King argued that any concern with the souls of humans required a concern with social and economic conditions.

King also studied the lectures and works of Mohandas K. Gandhi. The Indian leader's work convinced King that the Christian doctrine of love could be a force for social change. King wrote, "Gandhi was probably the first person in history to lift the love ethic of Jesus above mere interaction between individuals to a powerful and effective social force on a large scale." Like the early members of CORE, King became convinced that nonviolent resistance "was the only morally and practically sound method open to oppressed people in their struggle for freedom."⁵

The incident that launched Martin Luther King's civil rights activities and provided scope for his Gandhian form of the social gospel occurred on December 1, 1955. On that date, Rosa Parks, who had worked a regular day as a seamstress in one of the leading department stores in Montgomery, Alabama, boarded a bus and took the first seat behind the section reserved for whites. Later during the journey home, several white passengers boarded the bus. The driver ordered Rosa Parks and three other black passengers to stand so that the white passengers could have seats. Rosa Parks refused and was arrested. The black ministers in the community quickly organized in response to this incident, and on December 5 the Montgomery Bus Boycott began.

The bus boycott lasted for over a year. It ended on December 21, 1956, when, after the Supreme Court decision against segregation on buses, the Montgomery transit system was officially integrated. King emerged from the struggle a national hero among dominated groups. In 1957, he organized the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), which became a central organization in the civil rights struggle.

After SCLC was formed, boycotts and nonviolent demonstrations began to occur throughout the South. On May 17, 1957, Martin Luther King gave his first nationwide address, in Washington, D.C. He told his audience, "Give us the ballot and we will quietly, lawfully, and nonviolently, without rancor or bitterness, implement the May 17, 1954, decision of the Supreme Court." For King, meaningful school desegregation depended on the power of the black voter.

As civil rights demonstrations increased in intensity, national leaders began to work for federal legislation. In 1957 and 1960, two ineffective forms of civil rights legislation were passed by Congress. The most important civil rights legislation was not enacted until 1964, when violence in Birmingham, Alabama, and a mass march on Washington forced a response from the federal government. The civil rights movement made Birmingham and its director of safety, Eugene "Bull" Connor, symbols of the oppression of black people in the United States. President John F. Kennedy was quoted as saying, "Our judgment of Bull Connor should not be too harsh. After all, in his way, he has done a good deal for civil rights legislation this year."⁶ The March on Washington symbolized to Congress and the

American people the growing strength of the civil rights movement and provided the stage for television coverage of speeches by civil rights leaders.

The result of these activities was the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Under eleven different titles, the power of federal regulations was extended in the areas of voting rights, public accommodations, education, and employment. Titles IV and VI of the legislation were intended to end school segregation and provide authority for implementing the *Brown* decision.

Title VI, the most important section, establishes the precedent for using disbursement of government money as a means of controlling educational policies. Originally, President Kennedy merely proposed a requirement that institutions receiving federal funds must end discriminatory practices. In its final form, Title VI required mandatory withholding of federal funds to institutions that did not comply with its mandates. It states that no person, on the basis of race, color, or national origin, can be excluded from or denied the benefits of any program receiving federal financial assistance, and it requires all federal agencies to establish guidelines to implement this policy. Refusal by institutions or projects to follow these guidelines will result in the "termination of or refusal to grant or to continue assistance under such program or activity."

The power of Title VI rests in its ability to withhold federal money from financially pressed school systems. This became a more crucial issue after the passage in 1965 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The rate of desegregation was more rapid after the 1964 Civil Rights Act than before, but abundant evidence by the end of the 1960s showed that segregated education continued in the South. School desegregation moved at an even slower pace in the North. Originally it was believed that the *Brown* decision would affect only those states whose laws required segregated education. However, by the late 1960s, the courts began to rule that the *Brown* decision applied to all schools in the country, if it could be proved that segregation was the result of intentional actions by school boards or school administrators.

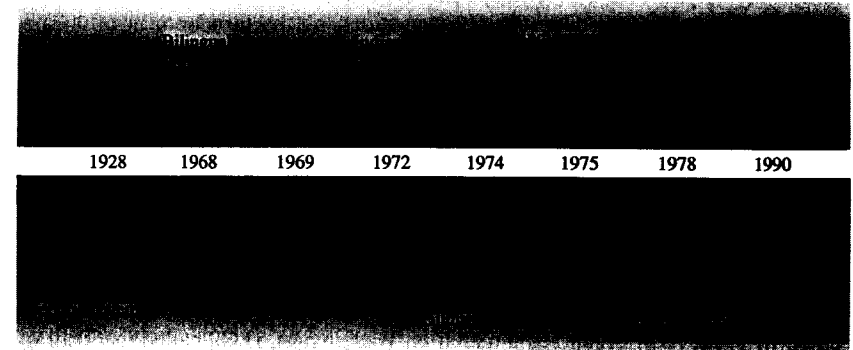
NATIVE AMERICANS

As African Americans were leading the fight against segregated schooling, Native Americans were attempting to gain control of the education of their children and restore their cultural heritage and languages to the curriculum. Native Americans shared a common interest with Mexican Americans and Puerto Rican Americans in supporting bilingual and multicultural education.

During the 1940s and 1950s, federal Indian policy was directed at termination of tribes and reservations. The leader of the termination policy, Senator Arthur V. Watkins of Utah, declared in 1957, "I see the following words emblazoned in letters of fire above the heads of the Indians—THESE PEOPLE SHALL BE FREE!"⁷ Freedom in this case meant freedom from federal supervision and control. It also meant the end of official tribal status.

Termination policies attempted to break up tribal relations by relocating Indians to urban areas. Relocation to urban areas was similar to the nineteenth-century

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federal policy that sent Native Americans to Indian Territory and reservations. But, in this case, Indians were to be "civilized" by being dispersed throughout the general population.

Termination efforts met stiff resistance from Indian and white civil rights activists. In 1961, 450 Indian delegates from ninety tribes attended the American Indian Chicago Conference at the University of Chicago. The delegates issued a *Declaration of Indian Purpose* calling for the end of termination policies. In the end, termination policy resulted in about 3 percent of the Indian tribes being terminated, including the Menominee of Wisconsin and the Klamath Indians of Oregon.⁸

While resisting termination policies, Native Americans began to demand greater self-determination. This was reflected in policy changes in the Bureau of Indian Affairs after the election of John F. Kennedy in 1960. Condemning the termination policies of the 1950s, the Kennedy administration advocated Indian participation in decisions regarding federal policies. Kennedy's secretary of the interior, Stewart Udall, appointed a Task Force on Indian Affairs, which, in its 1961 report, states, "to insure the success of our endeavor we must solicit the collaboration of those whom we hope to benefit—the Indians themselves . . . equal citizenship, maximum self-sufficiency, and full participation in American life."⁹

One of the results of the drive for self-determination was the creation, in 1966, of the Rough Rock Demonstration School. Established on a Navajo reservation in Arizona, the school was a joint effort of the Office of Economic Opportunity and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. One of the major goals of the demonstration school was for Navajo parents to control the education of their children and participate in all aspects of their schooling.¹⁰

Besides tribal control, one of the important features of the Rough Rock Demonstration School was the attempt to preserve the Navajo language and culture. In contrast to the deculturalization efforts of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the goal of learning both Navajo and English was presented as a

means of preparing children to “fend successfully in both cultures and see the Navajo way as part of a universal system of values.”¹¹

The struggle for self-determination was aided by the development of a Pan-Indian movement in the United States. The Pan-Indian movement was based on the assumption that Native American tribes shared a common set of values and interests. Similar to the role played by CORE, SNCC, and SCLC among African Americans, Pan-Indian organizations, such as the American Indian Movement (AIM) and the Indians of All Tribes, led demonstrations demanding self-determination. In 1969, members of the Indians of All Tribes seized Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay as a means of calling attention to the plight of Native Americans and demanded that the island, which Indians had originally allowed the federal government to use (Native Americans did not recognize the concept of private ownership of land) for twenty-four-dollars worth of beads, be made an Indian cultural and education center. In 1972, AIM organized a march on Washington, D.C., called the Trail of Broken Treaties. Members of the march seized the Bureau of Indian Affairs and hung a large sign at the entrance, declaring it the American Indian Embassy.¹²

INDIAN EDUCATION: A NATIONAL TRAGEDY

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, federal administrators gave support to Indian demands for self-determination. During his election campaign in 1968, Richard M. Nixon declared, “The right of self-determination of the Indian people will be respected and their participation in planning their own destiny will actively be encouraged.”¹³

It was in this climate of civil rights activism and political support for Indian self-determination that the U.S. Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare issued in 1969 the report *Indian Education: A National Tragedy—A National Challenge*. The report opened with a statement condemning previous educational policies of the federal government: “A careful review of the historical literature reveals that the dominant policy of the Federal Government toward the American Indian has been one of forced assimilation . . . [because of] a desire to divest the Indian of his land.”¹⁴

After a lengthy review of the failure of past educational policies, the report’s first recommendation was “maximum participation and control by Indians in establishing Indian education programs.”¹⁵ In its second recommendation, the report called for maximum Indian participation in the development of educational programs in federal schools and local public schools. These educational programs were to include early childhood education, vocational education, work-study, and adult literacy education. Of special importance was the recommendation to create bilingual and bicultural education programs.

Native American demands for bilingual and bicultural education were aided by the passage of Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1968 or, as it was also called, the Bilingual Education Act. This was, as I will explain later in this chapter, a product of political activism by Mexican American groups. Native Americans used funds provided under this legislation to support

bilingual programs in Indian languages and English. For instance, the Bilingual Education Act provided support for bilingual programs in Navajo and English at the previously mentioned Rough Rock Demonstration School.¹⁶

The congressional debates resulting from the criticism leveled at Indian education in the report *Indian Education: A National Tragedy—A National Challenge* eventually culminated in the passage of the Indian Education Act in 1972. The declared policy of the legislation was to provide financial assistance to local schools to develop programs to meet the “special” educational needs of Native American students. In addition, the legislation created a federal Office of Indian Education.¹⁷

In 1974, the Bureau of Indian Affairs issued a set of procedures for protecting student rights and due process. In contrast to the brutal and dictatorial treatment of Indian students in the boarding schools of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, each Indian student was extended the right “to make his or her own decisions where applicable.” And, in striking contrast to earlier deculturalization policies, Indian students were granted “the right to freedom of religion and culture.”¹⁸

The most important piece of legislation supporting self-determination was the 1975 Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, which gave tribes the power to contract with the federal government to run their own education and health programs. The legislation opened with the declaration that it was “An Act to provide maximum Indian participation in the Government and education of Indian people; to provide for the full participation of Indian tribes in programs and services conducted by the federal government.”¹⁹

The Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act strengthened Indian participation in the control of education programs. The legislation provided that, in a local school district receiving funds for the education of Indian students that did not have a school board having a majority of Indians, the district had to establish a separate local committee composed of parents of Indian students in the school. This committee was given the authority over any Indian education programs contracted with the federal government.

The principles embodied in the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act were expanded upon in 1988 with the passage of the Tribally Controlled Schools Act. In addition to the right to operate schools under federal contract as provided in the 1975 legislation, the Tribally Controlled Schools Act provided for outright grants to tribes to support the operation of their own schools.²⁰

Efforts to protect Indian culture was strengthened with the passage in 1978 of a congressional resolution on American Indian religious freedom. Remember that missionaries and federal policies from the seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries attempted to eradicate Indian religions and replace them with Christianity. The resolution recognized these earlier attempts to abridge Indian rights to religious freedom, stating: “That henceforth it shall be the policy of the United States to protect and preserve for American Indians their inherent right of freedom to believe, express and exercise traditional religions . . . and the freedom to worship through ceremonial and traditional rites.”²¹

In addition to the protection of religion, the federal government committed itself to promoting traditional languages with the passage of the Native American Languages Act of 1990. This act commits the federal government to “preserve,

protect, and promote the rights and freedom of Native Americans to use, practice, and develop Native American languages."²²

There is, of course, an ironic twist to federal legislation designed to promote self-determination and preservation of Native American languages, religions, and cultures when placed against the backdrop of history. The Five Civilized Tribes in Indian Territory were operating their own tribal governments and school systems in the nineteenth century. The Cherokees were conducting bilingual education programs and protecting their cultural and religious traditions. These forms of self-determination and protection of languages and cultures ended when Indian Territory was dissolved in 1907. Also, the tribes placed onto reservations in the nineteenth century were subjected to policies consciously designed to destroy their cultures, languages, and religions. Therefore, the federal legislation of the 1970s and 1980s, which were designed to reserve these policies, required many tribes to discover and resurrect languages and traditions that the federal government had already partially destroyed.

ASIAN AMERICANS: EDUCATING THE "MODEL MINORITY"

There is something curiously Anglo-Saxon about the "model minority" image of Asian Americans as hardworking, family oriented, thrifty, and moral. These ascribed values stand in stark contrast to previous public images. Several authors have suggested that this public image emerged in the 1950s and 1960s as part of the white backlash to the militancy of the black civil rights movement. Faced with the anger of black Americans demanding equal rights and economic opportunity, some European Americans began pointing their fingers at the Asian community and argued that they were successful in achieving the American dream without contentious demonstrations and accusations of prejudice and discrimination against the white population. "If" these European Americans seemed to say, "the black population acted like the Asian population they could achieve economic success without criticizing the white population."

In a sharp break with the previous public image of Asian American students as "deviants" and a "yellow peril," the model minority image presented the Asian American as possessing the "ideal" public-school personality traits of obedience, punctuality, neatness, self-discipline, and high achievement motivation. Historian Bob Suzuki argues that portrayals of the model minority image often neglect the historical evolution of the Asian American community. For instance, the early Chinese immigrants were hardly docile and were often described as being a "worldly, rebellious, and emotional lot."²³ Interestingly, Suzuki argues that the current school traits associated with the model minority image are a result of the assimilation process of the U.S. school system. Suzuki concludes, "The personality traits exhibited by Asian Americans are the result of a socialization process in which the schools play a major role through their selective reinforcement of certain cultural behavior patterns and inculcation of others that are deemed 'appropriate' for lower-echelon white-collar wage workers."²⁴

Historian Robert Lee identifies as typical of this new public image a story appearing in the December, 1966 issue of *U.S. News and World Report* titled "Success Story of One Minority in the US." The article contended, "At a time when it is being proposed that hundreds of billions be spent on uplifting Negroes and other minorities, the nation's 300,000 Chinese Americans are moving ahead on their own with no help from anyone else."²⁵

Lee argues that popular theories on ethnicity and cultural assimilation of the 1950s and 1960s helped popularize the model minority image. Popular ethnicity theorists envisioned a color-blind society where achievement would be determined by individual competition. This approach avoided an analysis of racism or the role of racism in U.S. history. This approach simply called for the elimination of personal prejudice and racism without any government intervention into the economy or private institutions. In the context of these arguments, education and schooling would be the key to creating a color-blind society based on individual competition. In Lee's words, these ethnicity theorists and politicians "who sought both to develop the Negro and to contain black demands for the systematic and structural dismantling of racial discrimination, the representation of Asian-American communities as self-contained, safe, and politically acquiescent became a powerful example of the success of the American creed in resolving the problems of race."²⁶

Ki-Taek Chun argues that the model minority image reached its peak with the publication of Harry Kitano's *Japanese Americans: The Evolution of a Subculture* (1969) and William Peterson's *Japanese Americans: Oppression and Success* (1971).²⁷ Both of these books linked schooling to what they considered the remarkable success of Japanese Americans. Peterson claimed that Japanese Americans were better off than any other group in U.S. society including native-born whites. In an indirect criticism of the black community, Peterson contended that, unlike other oppressed minorities, Japanese Americans "have realized this remarkable progress by their own almost unaided effort."²⁸ Kitano presented a success story marked by high educational levels and income. Thus, Chun found that by the early 1970s the claim of Asian American success in education and work was believed in by most U.S. social scientists.²⁹

Statistics provided evidence of Asian American success in education but not economically. In 1970, prior to large-scale immigration from other parts of Asia, the educational attainment of Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino Americans was higher or about equal to that of the white population. The median number of years of schooling for white males was 12.1, while the median for Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino Americans was 12.5, 12.6, and 11.9 respectively. However, economic achievement did not match educational achievement. The median white male annual income in 1970 was \$6,772, which was less than the Japanese American average of \$7,471. However, the incomes for Chinese American males (\$5,124) and Filipino American males (\$4,921) was considerably below those of white males.³⁰

Critics of the model minority image claimed it was being used to cover up the continuing racism in U.S. society. The disparity between educational achievement and income highlighted how education could be used to achieve the American dream in schooling but not in the workplace. Bob Suzuki argued, "Although they have attained high levels of education, the upward mobility of Asian Americans

has been limited by the effects of racism and most of them have been channeled into lower-echelon white-collar jobs having little or no decision making authority, low mobility and low public contact."³¹

I would argue that the model minority image created in the 1960s and 1970s might have distorted the image European Americans had of Asian immigrants arriving from Southeast Asia, particularly the Hmong and Cambodians. Assuming that these Asian immigrants would live up to the model minority image, European American educators might have neglected the real educational problems confronting these populations. For instance, the children of some Cambodian immigrants, despite the model minority image, were easily recruited during the 1980s and 1990s into existing violent youth gangs in the Los Angeles area. One reason was the continuation of racist attitudes toward Asian Americans. Describing his school experience in Stockton, California, in the 1980s, Sokunthy Pho complained, "I hated my parents for bringing me and my sisters . . . to America because we were always being picked on by the white kids at our school . . . They spat at us, sneaked behind us and kicked us . . . We didn't respond. . . . Instead, we kept quiet and walked home with tears running down our brown cheeks."³²

ASIAN AMERICANS: LANGUAGE AND THE CONTINUED STRUGGLE FOR EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

School problems for Asian Americans continued despite popular media extolling the virtues of the model Asian American student. The continuing struggle against educational discrimination was dramatized by events surrounding the historic 1974 U.S. Supreme Court decision *Lau v. Nichols*. The decision guaranteed equal educational opportunity to non-English-speaking students by requiring public schools to provide special assistance to these students to learn English so that they could participate equally in the educational process. In the words of the U.S. Supreme Court, "there is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers, and curriculum; for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education."³³

The problem presented in the *Lau* case was a classic example of the indirect forms of discrimination in the U.S. school system. Since English is the reigning language of the system, students not speaking English or with limited English ability cannot fully participate in classroom activities or instruction. Without some special help in learning English, limited-English-speaking immigrants and native-born citizens, such as Native Americans and Mexican Americans are deprived of equal educational opportunity.

The *Lau* case originated in concerns by Chinese American parents about the difficulties faced by their children in the San Francisco school system. In the 1960s and early 1970s, the Chinese American community complained to the school district that the language problems faced by their children were contributing, despite the model minority public image, to school failure and juvenile delinquency. Even a report issued by the San Francisco school system in 1969 admitted,

When these (Chinese-speaking) youngsters are placed in grade levels according to their ages and are expected to compete with their English-speaking peers, they are frustrated by their inability to understand the regular work.³⁴

Stressing the language problem, a persistent issue for Asian-American immigrant children, the 1969 school report concluded, "For these children, the lack of English means poor performance in school. The secondary student is almost inevitably *doomed to be a dropout and another unemployable in the ghetto* [my emphasis]."³⁵ This concern certainly didn't match the Asian American success stories touted in the press.

Despite recognizing the problem, school authorities did little to alleviate it. In 1970, only one-fourth of the limited-English-speaking Chinese American students in the San Francisco school system were receiving help. The statistics were worse for Chinese-speaking students. A 1970 investigation conducted by the Federal District Court in San Francisco found that 2,856 Chinese-speaking students needed help in learning English. However, more than 62 percent or 1,790 of these students were receiving no special instruction. For the other 38 percent, help was provided primarily through once-a-day 40 minute English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) instruction. Students were removed from their regular classes to receive ESL instruction. According L. Ling-Chi Wang, this approach to language instruction was called "once-a-day ESL bitter pill."³⁶ Wang writes that, after the ESL class, students "were required to attend regular classes taught only in English and compete helplessly and hopelessly with their English-speaking peers in all subject areas."³⁷

Enraged by the neglect of their children's educational problems, the families of Kinney Kinmon Lau and 12 other Chinese American students in 1970 sued in federal district court asking that the San Francisco school system provide special English classes taught by bilingual teachers. The school district objected to the demand and claimed that receiving help in learning the English language was not a legal right. The district court agreed with the school district and argued that limited-English-speaking and non-English-speaking students were receiving equal educational opportunity because they were receiving the same education as all students in the district.

After the district court ruling, the case hinged on the question of whether students are entitled to special instruction as part of the right to equal educational opportunity. The case was appealed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. Again, the appeals court agreed with the school district that the legal responsibility of the school district extended "no further than to provide them with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers and curriculum as is provided to other children in the district."³⁸

In 1974, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the decisions of the lower courts and argued that sometimes equal educational opportunity requires special programs for students. In language, that would have a profound impact on the education of all limited-English-speaking and non-English-speaking students, the Supreme Court maintained, "There is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers, and curriculum; for students

who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education.”³⁹

The *Lau* decision did not end the educational problems faced by the Chinese American community in San Francisco. Led by the Chinese for Affirmative Action, the local community had to struggle with the school district to implement the *Lau* decision. This struggle was part of a larger effort by the Asian American community to protect their civil rights.

HISPANIC/LATINO AMERICANS

The struggles of Mexican Americans and Puerto Rican Americans increased the opportunities for Hispanic/Latino immigrants arriving after the 1960s. Similar to African Americans, Mexican Americans turned to the courts to seek redress for their grievances. In Ontario, California, in 1945, Mexican American parents demanded that the school board grant all requests for transfer out of the segregated schools. When the board refused this request, Gonzalo Mendez and William Guzman brought suit for violation of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution. The school board responded to this suit by claiming that segregation was not based on race or national origins but on the necessity of providing special instruction.

In 1946, a U.S. district court ruled in *Mendez et al. v. Westminster School District of Orange County* that Mexicans were not Indians as claimed under the 1935 California law. The judge argued that the only possible argument for segregation was the special educational needs of Mexican American children. These needs centered around the issue of learning English. Completely reversing the educational justification for segregation, the judge argued that “evidence clearly shows that Spanish-speaking children are retarded in learning English by lack of exposure to its use by segregation.”⁴⁰ Therefore, the court ruled that segregation was illegal because it was not required by state law and because there was no valid educational justification for segregation.⁴¹

HISPANIC/LATINO CIVIL RIGHTS EDUCATION TIME LINE



Heartened by the *Mendez* decision, the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), the Mexican American equivalent of the NAACP, forged ahead in its legal attack on segregation in Texas. With support from LULAC, a group of parents in 1948 brought suit against the Bastrop Independent School District, charging that local school authorities had no legal right to segregate children of Mexican descent and that this segregation was solely because the children were of Mexican descent. In *Delgado v. Bastrop Independent School District*, the court ruled that segregating Mexican American children was illegal and discriminatory. The ruling required that the local school district end all segregation. The court did give local school districts the right to separate some children in the first grade only if scientific tests showed that they needed special instruction in English and the separation took place on the same campus.⁴²

In general, LULAC was pleased with the decision. The one point they were dissatisfied with was the provision for the separation of children in the first grade. This allowed local schools to practice what was referred to in the latter part of the twentieth century as “second-generation segregation.” Second-generation segregation refers to the practice of using educational justifications for segregating children within a single school building. In fact, many local Texas school districts did use the proviso for that purpose.⁴³

While the *Mendez* and *Delgado* decisions did hold out the promise of ending segregation of Mexican Americans, local school districts used many tactics to avoid integration, including manipulation of school district lines, choice plans, and different forms of second-generation segregation. For instance, the California State Department of Education reported in 1966 that 57 percent of the children with Spanish surnames were still attending schools that were predominantly Mexican American. In 1973, a civil rights activist, John Caughey, estimated that two-thirds of the Mexican American children in Los Angeles attended segregated schools. In *All Deliberate Speed: Segregation and Exclusion in California Schools, 1855–1975*, Charles Wollenberg estimates that in California by 1973 more Mexican and Mexican American children attended segregated schools than in 1947.⁴⁴

The continuation of de facto forms of segregation resulted in the formation in 1967 of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF). Initially, MALDEF focused on cases dealing with students who were punished for participating in civil rights activities. In 1968, MALDEF focused its attention on the inequitable funding of school districts in Texas that primarily served Mexican Americans. Not only were Mexican American children facing de facto segregation, but the schools they were attending were also receiving less funding than schools attended by Anglos.⁴⁵

The case brought by MALDEF, *Rodriguez v. San Antonio Independent School District*, had major implications for financing of schools across the country. In the case, a group of Mexican American parents brought a class action suit against the state of Texas for the inequitable funding of school districts. In 1971, a federal district court ruled that the Texas school finance system was unconstitutional. In its decision, the federal district court applied—as the U.S. Supreme Court had in the 1954 school desegregation case—the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The inequality in financing of school districts was considered a denial of equal opportunity for Mexican American children to receive an education. The U.S. Supreme Court overturned the decision on March 12, 1973, with the argument that school finance was not a constitutional issue. This Supreme Court decision meant that all school finance cases would have to be dealt with in state courts. Since 1973, numerous cases involving inequality in the financing of public schools have been argued in state courts.⁴⁶

In 1970, in the MALDEF case, *Cisneros v. Corpus Christi Independent School District*, Mexican Americans were officially recognized by the federal courts as an identifiable dominated group in the public schools. A central issue in the case was whether or not the 1954 school desegregation decision could be applied to Mexican Americans. The original *Brown* decision had dealt specifically with African Americans who were segregated by state and local laws. In his final decision, Judge Owen Cox ruled that African Americans and Mexican Americans were segregated in the Corpus Christi school-system law and that Mexican Americans were an identifiable dominated group because of their language, culture, religion, and Spanish surnames.⁴⁷

BILINGUAL EDUCATION: THE CULTURE WARS CONTINUED

Native Americans and Spanish-speaking residents were concerned about preserving their languages. In the 1960s, a new chapter in the culture wars was opened when Native Americans, Mexican Americans, and Puerto Ricans joined in efforts to have the public schools implement bilingual education programs. Those opposed to multicultural education quickly reacted to the bilingual education movement by arguing that the official language of the United States should be English.

During the 1960s, Mexican Americans began to demonstrate for the use of Spanish in schools and for the teaching of Mexican American history and culture.

In 1968, Mexican American students boycotted four East Los Angeles high schools, demanding bilingual programs, courses in Mexican American history and culture, and the serving of Mexican food in the school cafeterias. In addition, the students demanded the hiring of more Spanish-speaking teachers and the firing of teachers who appeared to be anti-Mexican American.⁴⁸

The school boycotts in Los Angeles attracted the attention of the newly formed La Raza Unida. La Raza Unida was formed in 1967, when a group of Mexican Americans boycotted federal hearings on the conditions of Mexican Americans and started their own conference. At the conference, La Raza Unida took a militant stand on the protection of the rights of Mexican Americans and the preservation of their culture and language. A statement drafted at the first conference proclaimed: “the time of subjugation, exploitation, and abuse of human rights of La Raza in the United States is hereby ended forever.”⁴⁹

La Raza Unida’s statement on the preservation of culture and language reflected the growing mood in the Mexican American community that public schools needed to pay more attention to dominated cultures and languages. The statement drafted at the first conference affirmed “the greatness of our heritage, our history, our language, our traditions, our contributions to humanity and our culture.”⁵⁰

Politicians responded to Mexican American and Puerto Rican demands for the presentation of Spanish in the schools. Liberal Democratic Senator Ralph Yarborough of Texas, believing that he would lose the 1970 election to a wealthy and conservative Democrat, decided that Hispanic support was crucial to his coalition of African Americans, Mexican Americans, and poor whites. In an effort to win Hispanic support, Yarborough, after being appointed to a special subcommittee on bilingual education of the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, launched a series of hearings in major Hispanic communities.⁵¹

The testimony at these hearings came primarily from representatives of the Mexican American and Puerto Rican communities, not educational experts or linguistic theorists. The hearings concluded in East Harlem, with Senator Edward Kennedy and Bronx Borough President Herman Badillo decrying the fact that there were no Puerto Rican principals and only a few Puerto Rican teachers in the New York City school system.⁵²

Yarborough supported bilingual legislation that focused on students whose “mother tongue is Spanish.” The legislation included programs to impart knowledge of and pride about Hispanic culture and language and to bring descendants of Mexicans and Puerto Ricans into the teaching profession. The legislation was clearly designed to win political support from the Hispanic community in Texas. Yarborough’s efforts resulted in the passage of the previously mentioned Bilingual Education Act of 1968.

Native Americans, along with Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans, welcomed the idea of bilingual education. The legislation promised that their cultures and languages would be preserved by the public schools. Bilingual education, as it was conceived of in Hispanic and Native American communities, involved teaching both English and Spanish or a Native American language. Some of the Civilized Tribes in Indian Territory used bilingual methods in their schools. In addition, bilingual education existed at differing periods in Mexican American and

Puerto Rican schools. The goal was, and is, to teach students to be fluent in two languages. In addition, Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Native Americans consider bilingual education to be part of a general effort to transmit their cultural traditions to students.

By the 1980s, the two major U.S. political parties were divided over bilingual education. Traditionally, organized ethnic groups, including Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans, were a strong force in the Democratic Party. In contrast, bilingual education became a major target of attack during the Republican administrations of the 1980s and 1990s. In fact, some members of the Republican Party joined a movement opposing bilingual education and supporting the adoption of English as the official language of the United States. The movement to make English the official language was led by an organization, U.S. English, founded in 1983 by S. I. Hayakawa, a former Republican senator.

In 1986, in reaction to the Reagan administration, the National Association of Bilingual Education increased its political activities and intensified its public relations efforts. In reference to S. I. Hayakawa and U.S. English, Gene T. Chavez, the president of the association, warned that "those who think this country can only tolerate one language" were motivated more by political than by educational concerns. At the same meeting, the incoming president of the organization, Chicago School Administrator Jose Gonzalez, attacked the Reagan administration and the Department of Education for entering an "unholy alliance" with right-wing groups opposing bilingual education, groups such as U.S. English, Save Our Schools, and the Heritage Foundation.⁵³

Within the Reagan administration, Secretary of Education William Bennett attempted to reduce support for bilingual education by appointing opponents of it to the government's National Advisory and Coordinating Council on Bilingual Education. The new appointees expressed a preference for immersing non-English-speaking children in the English language, rather than teaching them in a bilingual context. In addition, the new appointees favored giving more power to local officials to determine programs. Of course, such a policy would undercut the power the Hispanic community had gained by working with the federal government. Originally, Hispanics had turned to the federal government for assistance because they lacked power in local politics.⁵⁴

One of Bennett's appointees to the National Advisory and Coordinating Council on Bilingual Education, Rosalie Pedalino Porter, director of the Bilingual and English as a Second Language programs in Newton, Massachusetts, wrote a book on the controversy with the descriptive title *Forked Tongue: The Politics of Bilingual Education*. For Porter, the politics of bilingual education involves both political struggle within the educational establishment and the broader issue of cultural politics. Like other Bennett appointees, Porter rejects bilingual education which is also bicultural. She believes that language training should be geared toward providing the students with the language tools necessary for equal opportunity within the mainstream economy. But, unlike the more conservative of Bennett's appointees, she does not support attempts to make English the official language of the United States.

Porter's conclusions regarding bilingualism are a reflection of her broader views on cultural politics. She argues against bilingualism that is also bicultural because it segregates dominated communities with the least power. In her words, "The critical question is whether education policies that further the cultural identity of dominated groups at the same time enable dominated children to acquire the knowledge and skills to attain social and economic equality."⁵⁵

Porter opposes the efforts of U.S. English because its efforts are provocative and based on anti-immigrant attitudes and threaten special programs for language minority groups. She quotes a statement by Richard Rodriguez as representing her position on attempts to enact an amendment to the Constitution making English the official language:

What bothers me most about defenders of English comes down to a matter of tone. Too shrill. Too hostile. Too frightened. They seem to want to settle the issue of America's language, once and for all. But America must risk uncertainty if it is to remain true to its immigrant character. . . . We must remind the immigrant that there is an America already here. But we must never forget that we are an immigrant country, open to change.⁵⁶

Despite opposition from civil rights organizations and professional organizations, including the National Association of Bilingual Education, the National Council of Teachers of English, the Linguistics Society of America, and the Modern Language Association, efforts to make English the official language continue at the state and national levels. In 1923, Nebraska made English the official state language, followed by Illinois in 1969. In 1978, Hawaii made English and Hawaiian the official state languages. Indicative of the concerns of the 1980s, between 1984 and 1988 fourteen other states made English the official state language.⁵⁷

The major target of those supporting English as the official language is the ballot. Extensions to the 1965 Voting Rights Act granted citizens the right to voting information in their native languages. In communities where 5 percent or more of the population speak languages other than English, voting material must be provided in those languages. Supporters of English-language amendments argue that voters should be fluent in English and that naturalization procedures require a test given in English. Therefore, from their standpoint, ballots and election materials should be kept in English. On the other hand, opponents argue that election materials should be presented in native languages so that all groups will be on an equal footing with those who are fluent in English.

Besides the issue of political power, language is considered a cultural issue by Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Native Americans. A person's cultural perspective is directly related to attitudes regarding making English the official language. This connection is exemplified by Humberto Garza's comment regarding a requirement that Los Altos, California, city employees speak only English on the job: "Those council people from Los Altos should be made to understand that they are advocating their law in occupied Mexico [referring to the U.S. conquest of Mexican territory, including California]. . . . They should move back to England or learn how to speak the language of Native Americans."⁵⁸

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION, IMMIGRATION, AND THE CULTURE WARS

The reform atmosphere of the great civil rights movement contributed to the passage of the 1965 Immigration Act that did away with the restrictive immigration quota system of the 1924 Immigration Act. The new wave of immigration to the United States occurred at the same time that Native Americans, Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, and African Americans were demanding a place for their cultures in the public school curriculum. As a result of these demands and the problems posed in educating a new wave of immigrants, some educators began to advocate teaching about a variety of cultures—multiculturalism—in the public schools.

The multiculturalism movement renewed the culture wars. Opponents of multiculturalism argued that the public schools should emphasize a single culture—traditional Anglo-American culture. In contrast to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when immigrants from southern and eastern Europe were greeted with Americanization programs designed for deculturalization and the implanting of Anglo-American values, the new immigrants were swept up into the debate over multiculturalism initiated by the civil rights movement.

Influenced by the civil rights movement, the 1965 Immigration Act eliminated the blatantly racist and ethnocentric aspects of the 1924 Immigration Act. The results of the Army Alpha and Beta examinations administered during World War I contributed to the belief in the superior intelligence of northern Europeans. Wanting to protect the existing racial composition of the United States, the 1924 Immigration Act established an annual quota for immigration from individual countries based on the percentage that national group comprised of the total U.S. population in 1920. The openly stated purpose of the legislation was to limit immigration of nonwhite populations. Immigration to the United States sharply declined after 1924. After passage of the 1965 Immigration Act, immigration rapidly increased and by 1980 the top five sources of immigration were Mexico, Vietnam, the Philippines, Korea, and China-Taiwan.⁵⁹

By the 1990s, as a result of the civil rights movement and the new immigration, the debate about multicultural education ranged from concerns with empowering oppressed people to creating national unity by teaching common cultural values. Originally, leaders of the multicultural movement in the 1960s and 1980s, such as James Banks, Christine Sleeter, and Carl Grant, were concerned with empowering oppressed people by integrating the history and culture of dominated groups into public school curricula and textbooks. In general, they wanted to reduce prejudice, eliminate sexism, and equalize educational opportunities.⁶⁰

It was argued that the integration of different histories and culture into the curriculum would empower members of dominated and oppressed immigrant cultures by providing an understanding of the methods of cultural domination and by helping to build self esteem. For instance, the study of African American, Native American, Puerto Rican, and Mexican American history would serve the dual purpose of building self-esteem and empowerment. In addition, the empowerment of

women and people with disabilities would involve, in part, the inclusion of their histories and stories in textbooks and in the curriculum.

The study of a variety of cultures had an important influence on textbooks and classroom instruction in the United States. The cultural studies movement resulted in the integration of content into the curriculum that deals with dominated and immigrant cultures, women, and people with disabilities.

Many multicultural educators felt that simple integration of cultural studies into textbooks and the curriculum was not enough. Multicultural educator James Banks worried that many school districts consider content integration as the primary goal of multicultural education. He states, "The widespread belief that content integration constitutes the whole of multicultural education might . . . [cause] many teachers of subjects such as mathematics and science to view multicultural education as an endeavor primarily for social studies and language arts teachers."⁶¹

Banks proposed that multicultural education be considered a basic part of a student's general education, which means that all students become bilingual and all students study different cultural perspectives. In addition, multiculturalism should pervade the curriculum, including the general life of the school—bulletin boards, lunch rooms, and assemblies. In other words, all teachers and subjects should reflect a multicultural perspective.

In opposition to simply integrating the history and culture of dominated groups into the curriculum, some African American leaders, such as Molefi Asante, demanded ethnocentric schools that would focus on the history and culture of a specific group and teach from a particular cultural perspective.⁶² While Afrocentric schools gained the greatest attention, some Native Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Mexican Americans organized similar schools. The movement for ethnocentric schools, unlike the original movement for multicultural education, did not include concerns with gender, reducing prejudice, and students with disabilities.

The most popular of the ethnocentric schools associated with dominated cultures are Afrocentric. In the 1990s, public school districts in Miami, Baltimore, Detroit, Milwaukee, and New York created or considered plans for Afrocentric schools.⁶³ Advocates of Afrocentric education argue that they can improve a student's sense of self-worth, help students relate to the curriculum, and help students understand the causes of cultural domination.

An important concept in the argument for ethnocentric schools is cultural perspective. For instance, because African American culture evolved in the context of slavery and later forms of segregation and racism, there developed a distrust and suspicion about the white Anglo-American Protestant tradition. Consequently, the Afrocentrist turned to other traditions. As one of the leading Afrocentrists, Molefi Asante, argued, "Afrocentrism directs us to . . . mediate on the power of our ancestors. . . . Afrocentricity is the belief in the centrality of Africans in post modern history."⁶⁴

Teaching from an Afrocentric, Native American-centered, Mexican American-centered, or Puerto Rican-centered perspective creates a different view of the world than that of white Anglo-American Protestant culture. In fact, according to Asante, moving away from a white Anglo-American Protestant-centered curriculum

will completely change a student's view of the world. Asante wrote about this new perspective: "A new consciousness invades our behavior and consequently with Afrocentricity you see the movies differently, you see other people differently, you read books differently, you see politicians differently; in fact, nothing is as it was before your consciousness."⁶⁵

Supporting ethnocentric education, Jawanza Kunjufu argued that the inherent racism of white-dominated institutions hindered the education of African Americans. In his words, "We must develop programs and organizations to protect and develop African American boys because a conspiracy exists to destroy African American boys. The motive of the conspiracy is racism, specifically European American male supremacy."⁶⁶ He proposed an educational program that will prepare African American boys to understand their oppression and to be able to have a career. An important part of his proposal is to present strong African American male role models to young black boys so that they can break through the conspiracy. Similar arguments can be presented for Native American-, Puerto Rican-, and Mexican American-centered educational programs.

During the 1980s and 1990s, there was sharp reaction against multicultural education and the ethnocentric education advocated by dominated groups.⁶⁷ Protectors of Anglo-American culture, such as Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., argued that students should be united around a set of core values derived from white Anglo-American Protestant traditions.⁶⁸ Schlesinger, who is the author of many United States history books, argued that the institutions and culture of the United States are primarily the product of English and European values and that these core values should be the source of national unity. In his words, "The language of the new nation, its laws, its institutions, its political ideas, its literature, its customs, its precepts, its prayers, primarily derived from Britain."⁶⁹

Historically, Schlesinger argues, the culture of the United States was unified by the common use of the English language and core values derived from this white Anglo-American Protestant tradition. These core values, he states, include mutual respect, individual rights, tolerance of differences, and individual participation in government.⁷⁰

Similar to Schlesinger, Thomas Sobol, New York Commissioner of Education, stated his approval of a curriculum that unites different cultural groups around common values. Sobol states: "The democratic ideals and values to which we still aspire . . . the rule of law, freedom of speech, minority rights, tolerance of dissent, respect for individuals, and more—derive from British political and legal traditions."⁷¹

In California, State Superintendent of Education Bill Honig defended a new social studies curriculum by an appeal to the teaching of core values. Honig stated in 1991, "This country has been able to celebrate pluralism but keep some sense of the collective that holds us together. . . . Democracy has certain core ideas—freedom of speech, law, procedural rights, the way we deal with each other."⁷²

Schlesinger, Sobol, and Honig recognized that United States history contains many examples of the violation of these principles by federal and state governments. They recognized that at various times in history, federal and state governments supported slavery, committed genocide against Native Americans, and denied

equal rights and opportunities to many ethnic groups. But, they argue, it was these core values that provided the impetus for correcting these wrongs. The abolition of slavery, the extension of political rights to women, and the civil rights campaigns by African Americans, Mexican Americans, Native Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Asian Americans reflect these core values. These civil rights movements, according to Schlesinger, were based on the core values of the white Anglo-Saxon Protestant tradition.⁷³

Given this perspective, it is hardly surprising that those calling for the teaching of core values would object to the forms of ethnocentric education, particularly Afrocentric education, advocated by dominated groups. Schlesinger attacked Afrocentric education for distorting the importance of Africa in the development of Western traditions and in the development of African American culture. Because of the variety of African cultures from which African Americans are descended, Schlesinger argued, it is hard to identify a common African heritage for African Americans. In addition, many African cultures are more oppressive than the white Anglo-American Protestant culture, as proven by the fact that slavery continued in Africa for many years after it was abolished in the United States.⁷⁴

In addition, Schlesinger rejected the idea of teaching history for the purpose of building a sense of self-worth among children. In his words, "The deeper reason for the Afrocentric campaign lies in the theory that the purpose of history in the schools is essentially therapeutic: to build a sense of self-worth among minority children."⁷⁵ With regard to the teaching of the history of Africa, Schlesinger rejected the direct connection between African heritage and African American culture and dismissed the practice with the statement: "There is little evidence, however, that such invention of tradition is much more than a pastime of a few angry, ambitious, and perhaps despairing zealots and hustlers."⁷⁶

The culture wars of the late twentieth century reflect the centuries-old effort to make English and Anglo-American Protestant culture the unifying language and culture of the United States. A sense of racial and cultural superiority was brought to North America by English colonists and emerged during cultural wars throughout U.S. history. The attempt to make Anglo-American culture the dominant culture of the United States came from that sense of superiority—which was seriously challenged by the civil rights movement and the new immigration.

SCHOOLS AND THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

White women did not gain full citizenship rights until the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment on August 18, 1920. This amendment gave women the right to vote. In the 1960s, women began to focus their attention on discrimination in schools. Equal educational opportunity for women was high on the agenda of the National Organization for Women (NOW) when it organized in 1966. The founding document of the organization declared, "There is no civil rights movement to speak for women as there has been for Negroes and other victims of discrimination. The National Organization for Women must therefore begin to speak." In the NOW's founding document, education is called "the key to effective

participation in today's economy . . . [and public schools should educate woman] to her full potential of human ability."⁷⁷

During its first years of activism, NOW focused on:

- Eliminating discriminatory quotas against women in college and professional school admissions
- Urging parents, counselors, and teachers to encourage women to pursue higher education and professional education
- Eliminating discriminatory practices against women in the awarding of fellowships and loans
- Investigating the problem of female school dropouts

NOW's activities and that of other women's organizations turned to legal action with the passage of Title IX of the 1972 Higher Education Act. Title IX provided for gender equality in employment in educational institutions and for gender equality in educational programs. The legislation applied to all educational institutions, including preschool, elementary and secondary schools, vocational and professional schools, and public and private undergraduate and graduate institutions. A 1983 U.S. Supreme Court decision, *Grove City College v. Bell*, restricted Title IX in its application to specific educational programs within institutions. In the 1987 Civil Rights Restoration Act, Congress overturned the Court's decision and amended Title IX to include all activities of an educational institution receiving federal aid.

Armed with Title IX, NOW and other women's organizations placed pressure on local school systems and colleges to ensure equal treatment of women in vocational education, athletic programs, textbooks and the curriculum, testing, and college admissions. Below is a brief chronological list of achievements in providing equality of educational opportunity for women.

- 1972—Legal action was taken against school systems with segregated courses in home economics and industrial. . .
- 1974—Women's Studies: With backing from NOW, more than 1,000 women's studies departments are created on college campuses.
- 1975—Federal regulations were set forth to end sex discrimination in athletics.
- 1976—Lawsuits were filed regarding female participation in athletics and gender-biased hiring in school administration.
- 1976—The Educational Equity Act authorizes the Office of Education to prepare "non-sexist curricula and non-discriminatory vocational and career counseling, sports education, and other programs designed to achieve equity for all students regardless of sex."
- 1983—The last all-male school in the Ivy League, Columbia University, becomes co-educational.
- 1986—The FairTest is organized to counter gender bias in high-stakes tests.
- 1996—Virginia Military Institute and the Citadel become co-educational.

By 1996, NOW and other women's organizations could claim the following accomplishments.

- The number of female medical school graduates increased from 8.4 percent in 1969 to 34.5 percent in 1990.
- The percentage of doctoral and professional degrees awarded women increased from 14.4 percent in 1971 to 36.8 percent in 1991.
- Most discrimination in vocational programs ended.
- Female participation in high school athletics increased from 7 percent in 1972 to 37 percent in 1992 and in college athletics from 15.6 percent in 1972 to 34.8 percent in 1993.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

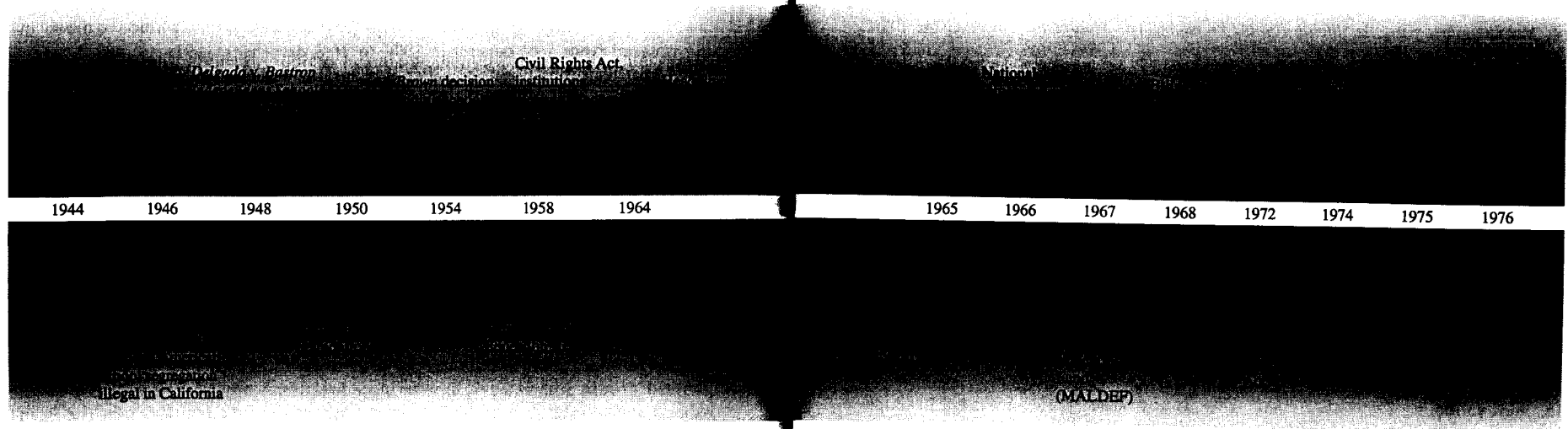
Parents of handicapped children and children needing special education had for years complained about segregation and the lack of services for their children. The political movement for federal aid to help handicapped students followed a path similar to that of the struggles over segregation. First, finding themselves unable to change educational institutions by pressuring local and state governments, organized groups interested in improving educational opportunities for the handicapped turned to the courts. This was the path taken in the late 1960s by the Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children (PARC).

PARC was one of many associations organized in the 1950s to aid handicapped and retarded citizens. These organizations were concerned with state laws that excluded retarded and handicapped citizens from educational institutions because these citizens were considered ineducable and untrainable. State organizations like PARC and the National Association for Retarded Children campaigned to eliminate these laws and to demonstrate the educability of all children. But, as the civil rights movement discovered throughout the century, local and state officials were resistant to change and relief had to be sought from the judicial system.

In *Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children (PARC) v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania*, a case that was as important to the handicapped rights movement as the *Brown* decision was to the civil rights movement, PARC objected to conditions in the Pennhurst State School and Hospital. In framing the case, lawyers for PARC focused on the legal right to an education for handicapped and retarded children. PARC, working with the major federal lobbyist for handicapped children, the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), overwhelmed the court with evidence on the educability of handicapped and retarded children. The state withdrew its case, and the court enjoined the state from excluding mentally retarded children from a public education and required that every mentally retarded child be allowed access to an education. The *PARC* case prompted lobbying groups representing the handicapped to file thirty-six cases against state governments. The CEC prepared model legislation and lobbied for its passage at the state and federal levels.⁷⁸

One political problem facing advocates of federal aid for children with special needs was the possibility of excessive federal control resulting from attempts to define an appropriate education for each handicapped or retarded child. In fact, to do so would have raised the specter of federal control of local education and alienated many members of Congress.

THE COLD WAR AND CIVIL RIGHTS TIME LINE



The resolution of this political problem, as it appeared in 1975 in Public Law 94-142 (Education for All Handicapped Children Act), was the requirement that an individual educational plan (IEP) be developed for each child jointly by the local educational agency and the child's parents or guardians. This gives the child or the parents the right to negotiate with the local school system about the type of services to be delivered. The IEP was considered to be a brilliant political strategy. In their study of the legalization of special education, David Neal and David Kirp call the IEP "an ingenious device in terms of political acceptability." They claim,

It avoids attempting to mandate specific services; it recognizes the rights of recipients, empowers them, and involves them in the process; it avoids treading on the professional discretion of teachers and potentially enhances their influence over placement decisions; it provides a means of holding local administrators accountable while paying some deference to the belief that the federal government should not interfere too much with local autonomy in education; and it appeals to local school officials by fixing the upper limit of the liabilities with respect to the child.⁷⁹

The gains made by women and children with special needs highlight the power and inclusiveness of the civil rights movement. A broad range of groups who felt excluded from equal participation in education joined in a common struggle in the streets, in school systems, in the courts, in state legislatures, and in the halls of Congress. Also, the civil rights movement illustrates the power people have to change social and political conditions if they are willing to organize and join in a common struggle.

CONCLUSION: THE COLD WAR AND CIVIL RIGHTS

Since the first arrival of English colonists in the seventeenth century, debates about schooling have included discussions of culture, race, and gender. The civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s was a continuation of these earlier controversies. However, in the 1950s and 1960s, civil rights struggles took place at the same time the Cold War was generating a stream of educational policies designed to use schools to strengthen national defense. One result of the civil rights movement was the expansion of the federal role in education with the launching of the War on Poverty programs in the 1960s.

The time line represents the interlacing of Cold War policies, the civil rights movement, and the expansion of the federal role in education.

NOTES

1. Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., *The Disuniting of America* (Knoxville, TN: Whittle Direct Books, 1991), p. 8.
2. *Brown et al. v. Board of Education of Topeka et al.* (1954), reprinted in Albert P. Blaustein and Clarence C. Ferguson, Jr., *Desegregation and the Law* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1957), pp. 273–282.
3. "The Effects of Segregation and the Consequences of Desegregation: A Social Science Statement," appendix to Appellants' Brief filed in the *School Segregation Cases* in the Supreme Court of the United States, October term, 1952, in *The Afro-Americans*.

- Selected Documents*, ed. John Bracey, August Meier, and Elliott Rudwick (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1972), pp. 661–671.
4. Martin Luther King, Jr., *Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story* (New York: Harper & Row, 1958), p. 91.
 5. *Ibid.*, pp. 94–97.
 6. Quoted by David Lewis, *King: A Critical Biography* (New York: Praeger, 1970), p. 171.
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