

presents

PARALLEL AND CROSSOVER LIVES: Texas Before and After Segregation

Welcome!

This education package contains:

Videotape

Highlights two oral history interviews created through the Texas Council for the Humanities program, *Parallel and Crossover Lives: Texas Before and After Desegregation*. The video includes two separate oral history interview sessions: one conducted in Austin, Texas (approximately 25 minutes), the other in the small east Texas town of Hawkins (approximately 50 minutes). In these interviews, African-American and Anglo students, teachers, and school administrators describe the roles they played in the history of school desegregation in Texas.

Introduction

Dr. Glenn Linden, Dedman College Associate Professor of History, Southern Methodist University, and author of *Desegregating Schools in Dallas: Four Decades in the Federal Courts*.

Teacher's Guide *prepared by Carol Schelk*

Video discussion guide

Classroom Extension Activities with links to related online URLs

*These activities were designed for use with high school students,
but may be modified for middle school students.*

Vocabulary

National and Texas state curriculum standards

Educator feedback form

Complete and returned to Texas Council for the Humanities

Please visit our Parallel and Crossover Lives website at
www.public-humanities.org/desegregation.html

Introduction

The Supreme Court's momentous *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision mandating an end to "separate but equal" public education changed forever the entire fabric of American society. It was a unanimous decision declaring that legally enforced segregation of public schools violated the constitutional right of African-American students to equal protection of the law.

At the time of this decision, 21 states and the District of Columbia had segregated school systems. Each had to decide how to comply with the new ruling. The Court allowed some flexibility in their response by handing down an additional ruling the next year requiring that desegregation be carried out with deliberate speed. Some of the border states decided to comply but states in the Deep South refused to acquiesce, issuing a public manifesto of opposition. In fact 19 U.S. senators and 81 congressmen in the South supported all lawful means to re-establish legal segregation. This set off years of confrontation and violence—the Montgomery bus boycott was followed by conflict over desegregation at Little Rock High School, Freedom Riders in Mississippi, the arrest of Martin Luther King in Birmingham over segregation, and the culmination in a massive march in Washington D.C., on August 28, 1963 and Martin Luther King's famous "I have a dream" speech. These events plus the assassination of President John F. Kennedy led to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. President Lyndon Johnson considered the Voting Rights Act "one of the most momentous laws in the entire history of American freedom." Finally, the federal government was in complete support of civil rights for all its citizens.

During the same years, the state of Texas wrestled with its response to the federal demands for desegregation. For almost 100 years, its laws had formed the basis for segregation in Texas. Then, a number of Texas cities began to admit blacks to their all-white schools. First Houston, the nation's largest segregated school system, admitted a number of blacks to its schools. No crowds gathered and most Houstonians accepted desegregation as inevitable. The following year Dallas desegregated its public facilities and eight of its schools without violence. A similar effort in Galveston proved successful. Later Texas laws supporting segregation were declared unconstitutional, thereby nullifying all school segregation laws and removing the last state laws discriminating on the basis of race.

Now the burden shifted to the local school districts to obey the *Brown* decision and to do so with deliberate speed. The process was begun, and has continued for four decades. On the whole it has been peaceful. But it is not over. The real question still remains to be answered – Will men and women of good will lay aside prejudices and work for the common good? If they do the result will be schools that we can be proud of, schools where boys and girls can be free from all discrimination, where there will be equal opportunities for education regardless of race. This must be the basis of our public school system and of our democracy.

Glenn Linden
Southern Methodist University

Teacher's Guide

Video Discussion Guide

- 1 Some of the people interviewed in the videos had positive things to say about their old, segregated schools, while some only remembered the negative aspects of the same schools. What were some of the positive and negative statements made in the video? Why do you think students attending the same school during the same time period had such different recollections of it?
- 2 How is oral history (either on tape or in print) different from the kind of history you read in your school's history textbooks? What factors make them different? Which do you think is "better" history? Explain why.
- 3 Describe race relations in your own school. Do you find them satisfactory? Explain why or why not.
- 4 Is racial mixing desirable and/or necessary in our country's education system?
- 5 Should governments (local, state, or federal) legislate desegregation?
- 6 The growing trend in America's schools is toward re-segregation of Anglos and African-Americans. Why do you think this is happening? Who might it benefit? Who might it harm? Do you think this new segregation will be different from the brand experienced earlier in our country's history? If so, how and why will it be different?
- 7 The U.S. Supreme Court is the highest court in our land. Decisions made there have changed every aspect of our American lives. Why then, after the court ruled in 1954 that school desegregation was illegal in the *Brown vs. Board of Education* case, did it take so long for U. S. schools to desegregate?
- 8 Define 'de facto' and 'de jure'. How do these terms relate to school desegregation?
- 9 How does the term "separate but equal" apply to school segregation?
- 10 Does the Supreme Court have the power to enforce its own decisions? Once they make a decision, does that mean the decision becomes a law that all Americans must obey? Discuss the roles of the three branches of government in this country.
- 11 In 1946 Heman Marion Sweatt was denied entrance to the University of Texas Law School because of his African heritage. Forty-one years later, in 1987, the University of Texas inaugurated the Heman Sweatt Symposium in Civil Rights, renamed its UT Little Campus the Heman Sweatt Campus, and established a \$10,000 scholarship in Sweatt's memory in the UT law school. The chain of events that led to such a monumental shift in Texas attitudes towards Sweatt had many links. Discuss which civil rights events you think were most instrumental in effecting this shift in attitudes about desegregation.

Classroom Extension Activities

I. Create a Synchronoptical Desegregation Timeline.

A synchronoptical timeline shows different categories of events occurring during the same timeframe. History books often present synchronoptical timelines illustrating events in a state, e.g., Texas, on one side of the timeline, and events in the country at large on the other side. Such timelines help students put events into context and perspective.

Below are listed events in three different categories:

Events important to the Civil Rights movement in general

Events dealing with school desegregation in the United States

Events dealing specifically with Texas school desegregation

Have students work in with partners or in small groups to research the highlighted items in these three categories. The following websites can be very helpful in gathering information. Students may also use their history texts and library reference resources.

Many students will already be familiar with some of the events listed in the following timelines. Teachers can customize their lists of events accordingly.

Encyclopedia Britannica: Guide to Black History

<http://blackhistory.eb.com/>

Includes 400 year timeline, learning guides, etc.

The Supreme Court Archives

<http://www.bowdoin.edu/~sbodurt2/court/>

Justices and rulings on important civil rights cases

Touro Law Center

<http://law.touro.edu/patch/SupremeCourtCases.html>

Full text of Supreme Court cases listed in chronological order

Cornell Law School Supreme Court Collection

<http://supct.law.cornell.edu/supct/index.html>

Current and historic decisions by the court

The Handbook of Texas Online

<http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/index.new.html>

Searchable database of Texas events, individuals and places

Once the chosen events have been researched, create a timeline large enough to accommodate the dates 1857 to the present. When putting all the dates in place, breaks may be necessary to represent long periods of time, e.g., between 1896 and 1950. A great deal of information will be included on this timeline, so prepare a working space that will accommodate a lot of activity.

When the timeline has all dates in place, add in the events. Beginning with events from the “U.S. Civil Rights” category, have students report their research on each event to the class. They can then write a short representation of it on the timeline in the appropriate place. When adding events to the timeline, consider color coding each of the three event categories to avoid confusion. The following events are highlighted in bold letters, and should be given to student in this form, with no explanation of the event’s details or importance. The added information in plain text is for teacher reference only. Students may want to add additional event categories, such as local or global, if documentation resources are available.

Discuss with students the dearth of timeline events in the 1970s-1980s. During this period, the focus of desegregation was on the physical integration of African American and white students through such measures as busing, school choice, magnet schools, use of ratios, redrawn school district boundaries, mandatory and voluntary intra- and interdistrict transfers, and consolidation of city districts with suburban districts (Willis,1994).

U.S. CIVIL RIGHTS EVENTS

- 1857 **Dred Scott v. Sanford** – rules that African-Americans are not U.S. citizens and decrees that Congress has no right to ban slavery from U.S. territories
- 1865 **13th Amendment** – outlaws slavery
- 1868 **14th Amendment** – guarantees all U.S. citizens, including African-Americans equal protection under the law
- 1869 **15th Amendment** – extends the right to vote to African-American men
- 1881 **First Jim Crow law** – passes in Tennessee requiring racial segregation of railway cars
- 1896 **Plessy vs. Ferguson** – establishes a “separate but equal” policy, allowing institutionalized racial segregation
- 1909 **NAACP founded**
- 1955 **Montgomery Bus Boycott**
- 1963 **March on Washington** – Martin Luther King, Jr. gives “I Have a Dream” speech
- 1964 **24rd Amendment** – outlaws poll tax designed to keep poor African-Americans from voting
- 1964 **Civil Rights Act** – outlaws discrimination in public accommodations as well as jobs
- 1965 **Voting Rights Act** – put voter registration under federal, rather than state control

U.S. SCHOOL DESEGREGATION EVENTS

- 1954 **Brown vs Board of Education** – declares segregation of public schools unconstitutional
- 1957 **Little Rock Nine** – enter Little Rock, Arkansas High School
- 1960 **Ruby Bridges** – first to integrate a U.S. elementary school
- 1962 **James Meredith** – integrates the University of Mississippi
- 1968 **Green v. Board of Education** – rules that school boards have the responsibility of immediate affirmative integration and establishes the “Green Factors”
- 1970 **Swann v. Charlotte** – Mecklenburg Board of Education - first district court ordered busing

TEXAS SCHOOL DESEGREGATION EVENTS

- 1866 **First Freedman’s Bureau schools open in Texas**
- 1950 **Sweatt v. Painter** – Heman Sweatt integrates University of Texas Law School
- 1952 **Huston-Tillotson College formed by merger of Samuel Huston College and Tillotson College**
- 1955 **African-American students in Austin, Texas allowed to attend previously all-white schools**
- 1956 **Mansfield School desegregation incident**
- 1960 **Borders v. Rippey** – Federal ruling which began the desegregation of Dallas schools
- 1963 **University of Texas integrates all aspects of campus life except housing**
- 1967 **Schools in Hawkins and Big Sandy, Texas are completely integrated**
- 1970 **US v. Texas** – US District Court orders Texas Education Agency to assume responsibility for desegregating Texas public schools
- 1971 **Austin’s Johnson High School closed under a court-ordered busing plan**
- 1996 **Hopwood vs. Texas** – virtually ends affirmative action programs in Texas higher education

II. Conduct an Oral History Interview

Have students interview someone in their town or city who lived through the era of school desegregation. This could be a family member, friend, or teacher. Before conducting their interviews, have students prepare a list of questions and study oral history techniques. Look for oral history guides in your history textbooks, the library, or at the following Oral History Association website, which offers excellent guidelines <http://www.dickinson.edu/organizations/oha/EvaluationGuidelines.html>

After conducting their oral history, have students write a 1-2 page paper describing what new information and insights they gained from the interview and the interviewing process.

III. Analyze the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

The 14th Amendment has become known as the “equal protection” amendment and is probably the most important amendment dealing with civil rights in our country. The signing of the 14th Amendment was required for southern states to reenter the Union after the Civil War.

Have students read the following sections of the Fourteenth Amendment:

Section 1: All Persons born or naturalized in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States, nor shall any State deprive any 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.

Section 5: The Congress shall have power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

After students have read the above sections, have them define all ambiguous terms. Then have them work with partners or in small groups to put the amendment into their own words.

Discuss with students the following questions:

1. What rights are guaranteed under the 14th Amendment?
2. Does the 14th Amendment clearly spell out the limits of federal and state laws regarding treatment of U.S. citizens?
3. Does this amendment deal specifically with issues of segregation in schools, housing, or employment?
4. How did ratification of the 14th Amendments relate to passage of Jim Crow laws in the south?

IV. Write a Civil Rights Poem

Give students a copy of the following speech, delivered by President Lyndon B. Johnson to the graduating class of Howard University in 1965. This speech outlined the concept of affirmative action.

“ You do not wipe away the scars of centuries by saying: ‘now, you are free to go where you want, do as you desire, and choose the leaders you please.’ You do not take a man who for years has been hobbled by chains, liberate him, bring him to the starting line of a race, saying, ‘you are free to compete with all the others,’ and still justly believe you have been completely fair...This is the next and more profound stage of the battle for civil rights. We seek not just freedom but opportunity—not just legal equity but human ability—not just equality as a right and a theory, but equality as a fact and as a result.”

Have students underline or highlight 10-15 words from the speech that they think represent the spirit of what President Johnson was saying. Then they are to use their chosen words to create short poems. Have each student write their completed poem on tagboard and post the poems in the classroom.

Vocabulary

parallel verywhere the same distance apart, and never meeting, as in *railroad tracks*; to be similar to, as in *You and I have parallel experiences*.

segregation a separation of one racial group from other racial groups, especially in public places

desegregation to put an end to the forced separation of races, especially in public schools, housing, employment, public facilities, etc.

integration to make schools, housing, transportation, etc., open to all races on an equal basis

NAACP National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

facility site or establishment, such as school buildings

recollection the act of calling back to mind or remembering

citadel any stronghold or place of refuge

ridicule to laugh at or make fun of

HEW United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare

AISD Austin Independent School District

dispersed sent in different directions, as in *The crowd dispersed after the meeting*.

arbitrarily a way of deciding an issue or question based on opinion rather than on any rule or law

hostile of or like an enemy; unfriendly or opposed

busing the act of transporting by bus; specifically, the transporting of children to a school outside their residential area as a means of establishing racial balance in that school

skepticism a doubting state of mind

stereotype oversimplified and often false representation of a person, thing or idea

discriminatory making distinctions, especially unfair ones, based on prejudice

defiant expressing bold opposition

crossroads point at which an important decision must be made

de jure segregation existing by right, but not necessarily in fact

de facto segregation actually existing, either legally or not

unitary status releases school districts from court supervision of their desegregation efforts

Green Factors typical components of a school system where desegregation is mandatory; they are: student assignment, faculty, staff, transportation, extracurricular activities, and facilities

affirmative action

practice by some government agencies, schools, and businesses of giving preference to ethnic minorities and women in admissions and hiring

Meeting Curriculum Standards with “Parallel and Crossover Lives” Learning Activities

This learning activity fits within the following national voluntary curriculum standards:

Social Studies

Culture

Time, Continuity, and Change

People, Places, and Environment

Power, Authority, and Governance

English, Language Arts

Read for Information

Use Technological and Informational Resources

This activity also meets the following standards from the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for 11th grade United States History since Reconstruction, United States Government, Sociology, and English III

United States History Since Reconstruction

History 1A, B, C; 7A, B, C, D

Government 15D, 17A

Citizenship 18A, B, C

Culture 21A, C

Social Studies Skills 24A, B, C, D, E, F, G

Sociology

Citizenship 1B

Government 7A; 8B

History 11A, B

Culture 12A, B, C

United States Government

History 3A, B

Government 8F; 9H, I

Citizenship 14A, B, C; 15B, C, D; 16A, B; 1B, C

Social Studies Skills 21A, B, C, D; 22A, B, C, D

English III

Reading

Historical-Cultural Heritage

Response-Evaluation

Educator Feedback Form

Please return this form to: Carol Schlenk, Education Coordinator
Texas Council for the Humanities Resource Center
3809-A S.2nd St. Austin, Texas 78704

Teacher's name _____

School _____ School District _____

Academic subject(s) in which these activities were used _____

Grade level(s) in which these activities were used _____

Did you view the *Parallel & Crossover Lives* oral history videotape with your students?

Yes _____ No _____ We viewed parts of it _____

Did you find the Video Discussion Guide helpful? Yes _____ No _____ Somewhat _____

Did you find the following elements of this Teacher's Guide useful?

- Vocabulary List Yes _____ No _____ Somewhat _____
- Curriculum Standards Yes _____ No _____ Somewhat _____
- Activity Related Websites Yes _____ No _____ Somewhat _____

Please check which of the Classroom Activities you used with your students.

- _____ Synchronoptical Timeline
- _____ Oral History Interview
- _____ Analyzing the 14th Amendment
- _____ Civil Rights Poem

Comments _____

Thank you for your input.