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Advancing Diversity in Higher Education

DIVERSITY DIGEST

The Lasting Legacy of *Brown*

By Mark Giles, editor, Diversity Digest

THIS ISSUE OF *DIVERSITY DIGEST* CONTAINS ARTICLES AND RESOURCES FOCUSED ON THE LASTING LESSONS, LEGACIES, AND SPIRIT OF THE 1954 *BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION* DECISION. THIS YEAR OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY, FILLED WITH CEREMONIES, CELEBRATIONS, AND COMMEMORATIONS OF THAT DECISION, HAS HIGHLIGHTED MANY WELL KNOWN AND LESSER KNOWN PEOPLE WHO FOUGHT FOR CHANGE AND REMINDED US OF HOW THEIR STRUGGLES TRANSFORMED THIS NATION. *BROWN* WAS A LANDMARK LEGAL DECISION AND A WATERSHED EVENT IN AMERICAN HISTORY. MOREOVER, IT INDELIBLY CHANGED THE SOCIAL, CULTURAL, AND POLITICAL LANDSCAPE OF THE UNITED STATES.

Not only did *Brown* help provide legal momentum to the mass struggles for social justice of the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, it also signaled a sea change in federal policy, directly targeting one of the most influential social institutions in the country: public education. Although the *Brown* decision mandated an end to racial segregation in K-12 education, it also had a direct and revolutionary impact on higher education and across American society. In addition, *Brown* was a touchstone for other disenfranchised minority groups who dared to dream that the promise of democracy as written in the Constitution would be fulfilled in everyday life. Clearly, *Brown* affected America's social, political, economic, and racial landscape from the civil rights movement of the 1950s through the oscillating legal decisions on affirmative action and desegregation of the past thirty years.

In This Issue

The articles in this issue of *Digest* explore a range of effects that the 1954 decision had on higher education. Vice Chancellor for Student and Diversity Affairs Leon Wiles of the University of South Carolina Upstate describes how the institutional commitment to diversity is a driving force for change and excellence. Charlie Nelms, vice president of institutional advancement and student affairs at Indiana University, shares excerpts from a speech he delivered at the Gary, Indiana, NAACP Life Membership Dinner. His words echo the importance of diversity and democracy and reflect a life and career lived on the front line of activism and leadership in higher education. Professor Heather E. Harris reveals the significance of using communication courses to advance principals of diversity for students. AAC&U staff member Daniel Teraguchi takes a slightly different approach and shows how *Brown* affected not only African Americans, but also Asian Pacific Americans and the movement to institutionalize Asian American studies.

> Brown v. Board of Education *left a lasting imprint on America and its notions of citizenship, democracy, diversity, and social equity.*

Scholar Marybeth Gasman's article explains the connection between *Brown* and historically black colleges and universities. AAC&U intern Sherwynn Umali shares her interviews with undergraduate student leaders at the University of Maryland College Park. She wanted to learn how they understood *Brown* and its significance to diversity and integration on that campus.

This issue also features campus-community connections and reveals the spirit of change that springs from democratic principles. Beverly Wright and Debra Rowe share a compelling story about an issue often overlooked in diversity conversations: environmental justice. Their article focuses on the empowering mission and work at Xavier University in New Orleans and the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice. Finally, Walter Clark describes initiatives at Middlesex Community College in Middletown, Connecticut, that focus on diversity-driven institutional transformation and preparing students to cross cultural boundaries.

Brown v. Board of Education left a lasting imprint on America and its notions of citizenship, democracy, diversity, and social equity. Second only to the post-World War II student enrollment boom caused by the GI Bill, *Brown* immeasurably transformed higher education, which continues to grapple with its complex implications. ■

AAC&U INSIDE DIVERSITY DIGEST

University of South Carolina Upstate: A Model of Excellence and Diversity

By Leon Wiles, vice chancellor for student and diversity affairs, University of South Carolina Upstate

ON MAY 17, 1954, THE U.S. SUPREME COURT RULED ON THE HISTORIC CASE OF *BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION*. THE DECISION ELIMINATED COURT-SANCTIONED SEGREGATION OF THE NATION'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS. THE COURT'S DECISION PROFOUNDLY CHANGED AND CHALLENGED BOTH THE AMERICAN EDUCATION SYSTEM AND AMERICAN SOCIETY IN WAYS NO COURT DECISION HAD IN THE PAST. IN 1955, ARTIST-ACTIVIST PAUL ROBESON NOTED THAT OPPONENTS OF THE DECISION WERE ENORMOUSLY DISSATISFIED AND "RESPONDED WITH HOWLS OF ANGUISH AND THREATS OF RETALIATION" (QUOTED IN SMILEY 2004).

The historical record is filled with references to the staunch resistance to desegregation and social equity throughout the South. Educational settings became the primary battlegrounds across the state of South Carolina. The University of South Carolina (USC) Upstate, formerly the University of South Carolina Spartanburg, has emerged out of that contested past as a model of institutional transformation where excellence and diversity go hand in hand.

The city of Spartanburg has a direct connection to the 1954 *Brown v. Board* decision (Kluger 1987). In late 1954, when the United States Supreme Court sought to determine how difficult it would be to desegregate schools in southern communities, Spartanburg was studied as a typical southern city. Despite the Court's thorough analysis and consideration of the impact of its ruling, it would be nearly a decade before the first African American student would attend a public school with white students in South Carolina.

Furthermore, it was not until 1963 that the first African American student enrolled in a public historically white university in South Carolina. That student was the former mayor of Charlotte, North Carolina, the Honorable Harvey B. Gantt, who graduated with honors from Clemson University in 1965. It was during that same turbulent decade of the '60s that USC Upstate (Spartanburg) was established. The name Upstate refers to the common name given to the region of South Carolina where Spartanburg is located.

USC Upstate gladly opened its doors to all races from its inception. Today, the institution is widely regarded as a leading example of interracial cooperation, cultural pluralism, equal opportunity, access, and equity. This has come about as a result of the vision and commitment of senior leadership; a sustained and energetic collaborative effort from all levels of the institution; the development of a clear institutional strategy; and broad participation by faculty, staff, students, and community stakeholders.

USC Upstate: A Growing Metropolitan University

Although the university was ethnically and racially diverse from its beginning, minority and international student enrollment and minority faculty and staff representation were modest. However, in the early 1990s, with Upstate South Carolina's flourishing international environment and increasing levels of participation by African Americans and other minorities in higher education, the university's

leadership realized that a general regional mission was not enough to assure the institution a prominent and appropriate role as a resource for the development of the Upstate region. Moreover, diversity and internationalization are matters of institutional credibility in a metropolitan region where 30 percent of the population is African American. The Upstate region also has the largest concentration of international corporate firms in the state as well as a rapidly increasing Hispanic population.

With the recognition that the university needed to adopt a broader vision and achieve new goals to enhance its viability in the region, USC Upstate entered the conceptual framework phase of a four-phase mission change. This change included:

- Development of a strategic framework
- Early accomplishments
- Tactical realignment
- Goal achievement

Upstate maintained diversity as an essential component of the change process. In August 1994, following intense consultations during his initial weeks in office, the new chancellor, John C. Stockwell, delivered a speech to faculty and staff calling for institutional realignment as a "metropolitan" university. Since 1994, the university has continued to develop its metropolitan mission, which emphasizes a strong commitment to diversity. The university recognized and readily accepted the challenge of preparing its students to succeed in a pluralistic society and a global economy.

Strategic Framework

The university needed a comprehensive strategy to guide its campus community development efforts. The first three years witnessed tremendous accomplishments, including:

- creation of diversity-related courses;
- approval of cognates in ethnic and women's studies;
- establishment of the Center for Women's Studies and Programs and the Center for International Studies;
- inauguration of an annual multicultural conference for pre-service teachers;
- creation of a diversity incentive fund to support innovative faculty and staff efforts to educate students about various aspects of diversity and democracy;
- development of a campus-wide diversity dialogue series in which faculty and staff learn about other cultures, discuss participation in the American democratic process, and debate controversial issues such as affirmative action, religious differences, and gender issues; and
- recognition of extraordinary diversity-related achievements by faculty and staff.

Students at USC Upstate

In addition, the university focused on realigning diversity support structures. The chief student affairs officer was reappointed as the vice chancellor for student and diversity affairs and began reporting directly to the chancellor. Other structural changes were adapted to realign and sustain the institution's expanded commitment to diversity, such as the establishment of an equal opportunity office, a disability services office, and a nontraditional student program.

Achieving Meaningful and Lasting Goals

Upstate has enjoyed significant success since it first embarked on its diversity agenda. Minority faculty representation has increased from 8 to 14 percent. Minority staff has increased to 18 percent. Minority and international student representation exceeds 30 percent. All institutional processes have been revised to reflect an emphasis on diversity. Diversity accomplishments are considered in the evaluation of senior-level administrators. In-service diversity training is offered regularly to the campus community. In addition, the chancellor served as the first chair of the board of the Urban League of the Upstate.

The institution has excellent working relationships with the international and Hispanic communities, local political and religious leadership, civic organizations, and numerous school districts. In addition, *U.S. News and World Report* ranked Upstate among the top five southeastern universities for its diversity achievement and identified it as one of the best public

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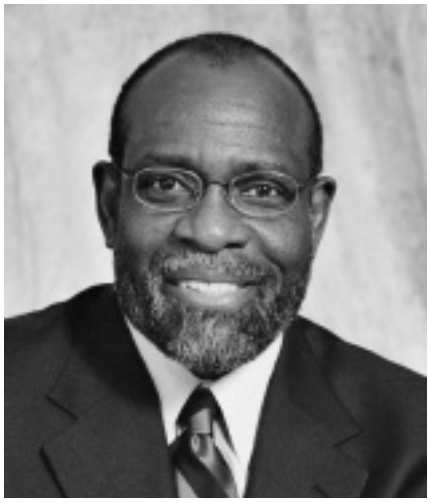
Fifty Years after *Brown v. Board of Education*: Reflections from an Activist-Administrator

By Charlie Nelms, vice president for institutional development and student affairs, Indiana University. The following article was developed from a speech delivered by Dr. Nelms at the Gary, Indiana, NAACP Life Membership Dinner, May 14, 2004. Printed with permission.

THE *BROWN* DECISION WAS NOT REALLY ABOUT INTEGRATION; IT WAS ABOUT EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY WITHOUT REGARD TO RACE. WHILE THE CASE CENTERED ON EDUCATION, IT TOUCHED EVERY SPHERE OF AMERICAN SOCIETY. I CHALLENGE OUR SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES, PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND CHURCHES, CIVIC GROUPS AND SOCIAL CLUBS TO SPONSOR A SERIES OF PUBLIC FORUMS ON THE CONTINUING SIGNIFICANCE OF THE *BROWN* DECISION.



Charlie Nelms

For me, *Brown* was not just a legal case. It was a lived experience. Growing up in the Delta region of Arkansas, one of the poorest and most segregated regions in America, I drank from the "colored only" water fountain. I rode in the back of the bus. I used the "colored only" bathroom. I walked the dirt and gravel roads to a one-room, all-black, poorly funded public school. At the undergraduate level, the historically black college, Arkansas AM&N College, was the only option available to me.

Making Progress

I have found a hundred ways in which not much has changed since *Brown v. Board*, and a hundred more ways in which our society and our educational system are profoundly different. First, the good news: this former Arkansas farm boy recently returned from the University of Michigan's commencement, where he proudly watched his only child receive a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree. That could not have happened without *Brown*. In April, I sat with pride on the Indiana University platform when we celebrated the inauguration, right in the heart of what used to be Ku Klux Klan territory, of the first black president of Indiana University, Adam Herbert. That certainly could not have happened without *Brown*.

Clearly, most African Americans have gone further in their lives and most of their children have achieved more than would have been possible without *Brown*. We should certainly celebrate these victories; yet the *Brown v. Board of Education* case was about so much more than just desegregating American education. The *Brown* decision delivered a mortal blow against the legally sanctioned racial apartheid and discrimination that permeated American society.

> *The* Brown *decision delivered a mortal blow against the legally sanctioned racial apartheid and discrimination that permeated American society.*

Standing Up for Change

There is one thing I have learned in my lifetime as a social activist and university administrator: what we are able to do or not do is seldom a matter of money; it is almost always a matter of will. Beyond that, what must we do? First and foremost, we must raise our expectations about what students can, should, and must learn. The research is clear. Most people will perform to meet preexisting expectations—whether those expectations are high or low. One of the most damaging aspects of poor schools or underprivileged schools is that most of the time hardly anything is expected, so very little happens. If we do not expect great things from our children, we will raise a generation that is valueless, visionless, and ultimately voiceless.

Ignorance is the most serious threat to democracy. We should serve as role models and commit our money, our time, and our talents to our communities. If you, like me, have been economically fortunate enough to live a comfortable life, do not hesitate to give back to your community. This is the least we can do to usher in the changes that might help fulfill the promise of *Brown* and raise the potential and performance of future generations of college students and citizens. ■

A Search for Deep Diversity in the Communication Classroom

By Heather E. Harris, assistant professor of communication arts and director of multicultural affairs, Villa Julie College

THE UNFINISHED AGENDA OF MAKING AMERICA MORE INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE MUST CONTINUE NOW THAT THE CELEBRATIONS MARKING THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF *BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION* ARE ENDING. THE LANDMARK LEGAL DECISION FROM WHICH THE MOMENTUM FOR MID-TWENTIETH-CENTURY CIVIL RIGHTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS MOVEMENTS BEGAN REQUIRES A RENEWED COMMITMENT. *BROWN* IS MORE THAN AN HISTORICAL FACT; IT REMAINS A PRESENT-DAY CHALLENGE FOR ALL OF US—ESPECIALLY THOSE IN THE ACADEMY.

Heather E. Harris

In *The Unfinished Agenda of* Brown v. Board of Education (2004), contributors such as Cheryl Brown Henderson and Gary Orfield argue similar points. In his chapter, "Renewing Our Commitment," Orfield notes:

> We need to begin a new national debate like that which followed the *Brown* decision, and address issues of a much more profoundly diverse society in which 80 percent of the population lives in complex, interdependent, but deeply stratified metropolitan areas.

One means of addressing such a challenge is to begin a conscious and continuous dialogue that moves beyond the boundaries of race and includes ethnicity and the cultural dynamics that result from particular group identification. Our quest should be for deep diversity.

Deep diversity functions beneath the superficial limitations that often shape conversations on topics such as race or determine the numerical representation of ethnic groups within a particular institution. Through deep diversity, we seek to understand an individual's values and beliefs as a benefit of complex interaction with others. Specifically, we seek a better understanding of the whole person. Where deep diversity exists, the idea of co-culture becomes fundamental. Co-culture refers to the culture of institutional members and presumes the validity of all voices in that setting. A co-cultural lens emphasizes the search for the commonalities in our humanity while seeking to navigate, understand, appreciate, and respect the differences (Harris 2000).

Intercultural competence is urgently needed in the United States. One of the best places to develop this skill is in college.

It was this search for deep diversity that prompted my dissertation research on student ideas about culture at a metropolitan northeastern four-year college with one of the most ethnically diverse student bodies in the United States. This article and the student quotes it includes are drawn from that larger study. With the exception of the faculty, the students in those communication classrooms had a "United Nations" flavor, representing diverse cultures, languages, and perspectives.

According to Barbara Hueberger and Diane Gerber (1999), a well-educated student is cognizant of multiple realities, interpretations, and points of view. The students in this study emphasized the differences in the physical and outward characteristics of their classmates and themselves when explaining diversity. They were relatively unaware of the ways in which the cultures stemming from their various ethnicities were being communicated in the classroom and in every minute of their lives. Overall, the students viewed diversity simply as difference, took the complex notions of culture for granted, and desired more intercultural interactions.

Communication was selected for study because it was a required course for most of the students. Furthermore, verbal communication serves as a primary transmitter of culture. The communication course and its classroom composition provided a wonderful opportunity for intensive student interaction around culture. A discussion of culture allows the dialogue to move beyond a reliance on social constructs of race, which can sometimes perpetuate dehumanizing systems by narrowly categorizing human beings into a hierarchy based largely on skin color. Relying on these constructs tends to erode rather than foster conversations that might lead to mutual understanding, appreciation, and respect. Harold Barclay

Bloomfield Curriculum Transformation

Colleges and universities around the country have incorporated social history into powerful courses focused on the civil rights movement, the Freedom Summer of 1964, and the legacy of *Brown v. Board of Education*. One campus-wide approach to these topics, developed by Bloomfield College in New Jersey, teaches students about diversity, democracy, and inclusion by highlighting significant periods of U.S. history.

Bloomfield's history department developed the Freedom Summer Project in commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the social action movement of black and white college students who volunteered to travel through Mississippi in 1964 to register black citizens to vote. The Freedom Summer Project is a comprehensive set of interdisciplinary courses and cocurricular activities planned for 2004 and 2005. Activities across the campus encourage students to think and learn about the power of active citizens to bring democracy to life. Several interdisciplinary courses have been developed to advance these experiences, such as the Freshman Seminar, courses in the Writing and Analysis Program, the Sophomore Core on Social Responsibility, and a humanities course, "Cultural Encounters in Early America," which examines the lives of Native Americans, Africans, and Europeans in colonial America. Other activities related to the initiative include media projects by creative arts and technology faculty and students and historical reenactments by various student groups.

Bloomfield College is one of seven institutions participating in the New Jersey Campus Diversity Initiative, which seeks to promote intergroup understanding, reduce prejudice, and foster inclusive communities in the state of New Jersey. The Bildner Family Foundation has partnered with the Association of American Colleges and Universities in this three-year project. See www.aacu.org/bildner/index.cfm for more information. More information about Bloomfield's Freedom Summer Project can be found at http://users.bloomfield.edu/freedomsummer.

(1986) and Edward Hall (1981) suggest that access to an individual's worldview is gained from an awareness of a variety of cultures and related cultural manifestations such as beliefs, practical knowledge, language, social structures, organization, and technology.

Diversity as Difference

"When many people from different cultures come together—that for me is diversity." —*Israeli female*

"I guess I would say a variety of ethnic and regional backgrounds. I'd say culture to me also goes to the . . . class and sexual orientation." —*European American male*

I found that students overwhelmingly viewed diversity simply as difference. Few images of similarities were associated with the term. Perceptions of difference hinged on things students could see, such as skin color or race, or surface cultural elements, such as clothing, food, or religious practices, rather than on the learned and often unconscious assumptions about themselves and their classmates that guided their lives. Their understanding reflected the focus currently placed on diversity in our institutions, which often centers on festivals, speakers, art, music, and passive cultural exploration as opposed to active engagement.

While a Eurocentric cultural perspective currently dominates our educational institutions, we can adopt a more expansive framework, or "Paradigm of Inclusiveness," in our learning environments (Harris 2000). This paradigm affirms all co-cultural experiences, including the Eurocentric perspective. By removing cultural dynamics often perceived as "other" from the realm of the strange and the abnormal, the paradigm encourages coexistence at the level of thought, feelings, and behaviors. Within this inclusive framework, perceptions of inequality as well as equality are able to come forth from all concerned because the historically silenced are given voice.

Culture Shaping Culture

"In one of my classes in intercultural communication they asked everyone to bring in something from your culture, and everyone brought in an item. . . . I was baffled. What do I bring? Like slave chains? Honest to God. I was like—what is my culture?" —*African American female*

"Just in our group alone, it was amazing. . . . We had five people in our group—five different cultures—chosen at random—and that diversity really helped us with our project. . . . It gave me a better understanding of how each culture communicates among themselves and with each other." —*Filipino female*

A Filipino student expressed surprise that her grandmother and the grandmother of a Haitian group member shared similar traits and beliefs. After they had interacted with a student from another culture, students often realized that their culture was constantly evolving. The contact tended to jolt them into awareness of their own identity as they sought a more multifaceted understanding of their classmates. It was as if they saw themselves more clearly in a mirror without realizing the mirror had a subtle and distorting surface film.

Wanted: A Higher Degree of Intercultural Interaction

Students appreciated the guided intercultural interaction provided in some communication classrooms. It was through that contact that they began to uncover cultural similarities. Many stated that in most of their classes they did not have the chance to explore and understand their classmates. The interaction gave them cultural skills they could use outside of the communication classroom.

Intercultural competence is urgently needed in the United States. One of the

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The 1954 *Brown* Decision: Fueling the Torch of Liberation for Asian Pacific Americans

By Daniel Hiroyuki Teraguchi, office of diversity, equity, and global initiatives, AAC&U

AN ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN (APA) PERSPECTIVE ON THE IMPACT OF *BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION* USUALLY STARTS BY COMPARING HISTORICAL SCARS OF SEGREGATION INSTEAD OF CONSIDERING THE LIBERATING EFFECT THE DECISION HAD ON THEIR COMMUNITY. THE 1954 *BROWN* DECISION PROPELLED THE APA COMMUNITY TO MOVE BEYOND INTERETHNIC DIFFERENCES AND TO DEFINE HOW THEY MIGHT AFFECT THE CHANGING AMERICAN LANDSCAPE. ACCORDING TO GLENN OMATSU (1989), SENIOR LECTURER IN ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES AT CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY NORTHRIDGE, THE ASIAN AMERICAN MOVEMENT EMBRACED FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS OF OPPRESSION AND POWER AND ADOPTED LIBERATION AS AN ULTIMATE GOAL. BY THE LATE 1960S AND EARLY 1970S, ASIAN AMERICANS HAD JOINED THE BLACK LIBERATION MOVEMENT, WHICH THEN WAS LEADING THE CHARGE FOR RACIAL MINORITIES FIGHTING FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE.

Part of that charge reached San Francisco State University in 1968 and 1969. After a five-month strike by student leaders of the Third World Liberation Front, San Francisco State University gave birth to the first school of ethnic studies in the nation. For Asian American students who participated in the strikes, this momentous event marked a "shedding of silence and an affirmation of identity" (Umemoto 1989). Since that strike, ethnic studies and women's studies programs have challenged U.S. institutions of higher education to honor democratic principles of equality and opportunity by designing curricula to reflect the experiences and contributions of marginalized communities.

The fiftieth anniversary of the *Brown* decision marks another momentous point in racial minorities' march toward social justice. For APAs, it is also time to thank the Asian American studies (AAS) pioneers, such as Jim Hirabayashi, Yuji Ichioka, Elaine Kim, Don Nakanishi, Ling-chi Wang, and Jean Wu, for transforming APA students into political activists, community leaders, and a new generation of committed AAS faculty. This new generation of faculty inherits the fruits of the labor that marginalized community movements began fifty years ago—the experience of those who were involved in desegregation is now a rich educational resource.

Today Asian American studies classrooms are pedagogically rich environments because of the diversity of non-Asian Americans and the significant expansion of the APA student body. In particular, the APA college population has been dramatically enriched by immigration after 1965 legislation opened U.S. borders, the Southeast Asian refugee resettlement since 1975, and the increasing presence of multiracial APAs.

But with the expansion of the Asian American profile also come new challenges within the Asian American community. Most pernicious has been the reckless use of the "model minority" myth as evidence that affirmative action is no longer necessary. Because it focuses on the educational and economic success of Japanese Americans and Chinese Americans, the "model minority" myth has rendered Cambodians, Laotians, Hmong, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders nearly invisible.

Even though desegregation enabled some to use Asian Americans inappropriately as a generalized success story, the combination of racial discrimination and the socioeconomic polarization of the Asian American community has created important topics of investigation for AAS faculty. For example, the complex profile of Asian Americans has spawned new research within AAS on the discriminatory practices that occur even when educational credentials are impeccable. New investigations include how Asian Pacific Americans can break through the glass ceiling, or how the limited mental health services for APA students, who often need help even when they are succeeding academically, can be remedied.

In the end, the *Brown* decision helped unite Asian Americans in the name of justice, equality, and democracy. Remembrance of the fiftieth anniversary should lead Asian Pacific Americans to unite with even more vigor and fuel the torch of liberation lit by pioneer faculty and community leaders. AAS faculty have a responsibility to help youth understand their complex world and empower them to be responsible citizens committed to serving their communities and alleviating the inequalities of our society. *Brown*'s effect on APAs is a prime example of how benefits intended for one group can have a powerful influence on others. ■

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Brown v. Board's Legacy and Contemporary Black Higher Education

By Marybeth Gasman, assistant professor of higher education, University of Pennsylvania

Marybeth Gasman

AS A SCHOLAR WHO STUDIES BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, I RECEIVE QUERIES FROM THE NEWS MEDIA ON A REGULAR BASIS ABOUT ISSUES RELATED TO THESE HISTORIC INSTITUTIONS. WITH THE CURRENT "CELEBRATION" OF THE *BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION* DECISION, ONE QUESTION FROM REPORTERS IS ASKED MORE THAN ANY OTHERS: "WHY SHOULD BLACK COLLEGES EXIST IN THE POST-*BROWN* ERA?" ALTHOUGH THIS IS A LEGITIMATE QUESTION, IT ALWAYS UNSETTLES ME. I WONDER WHY NO ONE EVER ASKS IF PREDOMINANTLY WHITE INSTITUTIONS (PWIS) SHOULD STILL EXIST. I CAN ONLY CONCLUDE THAT THE REASON REPORTERS POSE ONLY ONE QUESTION IS THE CONTINUING STIGMA ASSOCIATED WITH ALL-BLACK INSTITUTIONS AND THE ASSUMPTION THAT PWIS ARE INTEGRATED.

Brown and the Assumption of Inferiority

I will speak first to the stigma of inferiority. This notion has been attached to black colleges since their establishment but was actually reinforced by the majority opinion in the *Brown* decision. In 1954, Chief Justice Earl Warren wrote, "Segregation of white and colored children in public schools has a detrimental effect upon the colored children." In making its decision, the Court relied on the work of several social scientists—the most prominent was Kenneth B. Clark. With his wife, Mamie Phipps, Clark conducted research on the self-image of black children, and this research was used by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) to convince the Warren Court that segregation had a negative effect on black children.

Based upon their research, the Clarks concluded that segregation was psychologically damaging to black children, that it often created feelings of inferiority, self-rejection, and loss of self-esteem, and that this in turn negatively affected their learning ability. Of course, Earl Warren noted in his opinion and the NAACP argued that it was segregation with the "sanction of law" that caused these feelings, but that technicality is lost on contemporary audiences. As the legal scholar Derrick Bell points out so eloquently in his new book, *Silent Covenants:* Brown v. Board of Education *and the Unfulfilled Hopes for Racial Reform* (2004), all-black institutions were pronounced substandard for their very racial makeup, but nothing was said of their all-white counterparts. According to the Warren Court, an all-white educational environment did not have any negative effect on the self-concept of white children and was deemed obviously superior.

Quality of Black Colleges and Universities

The most damaging aspect of the assumed inferiority of all-black institutions is that all 103 historically black colleges are lumped into a single, substandard category. I often have to remind reporters, scholars, and policy makers that, yes, black colleges have some commonalities—for example, a dedication to racial uplift—but there are as many different kinds of black colleges as PWIs. Black colleges are public, private, four-year, two-year, religious, nonreligious, selective, and nonselective. Each is dedicated to a unique educational mission. Some are strong in the humanities, others in music, and still others in the sciences. For example, Xavier University in New Orleans has become nationally known for its ability to nurture and graduate students who do well on the MCAT, attend medical school, and pass state medical exams. In fact, in 2001 Xavier was ranked the top institution by the American Medical Association for placing African American students in medical school (see Figure 1).[1] In 2003, 169 students from Xavier gained entry into chemistry- or biology-based graduate and professional schools (including eighty-four who were accepted into medical schools). Likewise, Spelman and Bennett Colleges, both historically black women's institutions, produce over 50 percent of the African American women in science-related doctoral programs nationwide. The second reason I think the public continues to ask, "Why do we need black colleges?" is that the majority of white people assume that the playing field is level and that *Brown* has made an education at a predominantly white university possible for most African American students. However, if you look at the statistics pertaining to African American students at PWIs, the picture is bleak and could get worse.

Figure 1. Medical School Placement of African Americans (2001)

*denotes historically black institution

Ranking	Institution	Number of Students
1	Xavier University*	94
2	Spelman College*	38
3	Harvard University	37
4-5 (tie)	Howard University*/Morehouse College*	33/33
6	University of Maryland College Park	24
7	Johns Hopkins University	20
8	University of California-Los Angeles	17
9-10 (tie)	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill/ University of Virginia	16/16

(Data from American Medical Association, 2001)

Predominately White Institutions and Black Students

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, only 11.4 percent of African Americans hold bachelor's degrees, compared to 21.5 percent of the white population. Moreover, African Americans make up only 10.1 percent of those who attend college, while whites make up 72.9 percent.

Of these African American students, 28.5 percent attend historically black colleges. The rest attend predominantly white institutions throughout the country. Some of these institutions, either through aggressive recruitment strategies or because of their location in predominantly black cities, have been able to attract a significant percentage of black students.

For example, the student body of Georgia State University in Atlanta is 30 percent African American. It awards more bachelor's degrees to African American students than any other PWI. In 2003, Georgia State graduated 885 African American students. Temple University and Florida State University follow with student bodies boasting 20 percent and 11.5 percent African American students respectively. Temple graduated 753 and Florida State 748 African Americans in 2003. Despite these hopeful statistics, PWIs, for the most part, have small percentages of African American students. In fact, of the top ten institutions that graduate the most African American baccalaureates, only three are PWIs (see Figure 2).

In a troubling trend, the number of African Americans admitted into the University of California system fell 15 percent from 2003 to 2004. Most dire was the plummeting enrollment of black students at UC-Berkeley—arguably the most prestigious school in the system. Of the 7,753 students admitted in the freshmen class, only 194 were African American—a 30 percent decrease from 2003. Most scholars blame this drop on the backlash against race-based admissions in California. In 1997, the last year Berkeley considered race as a factor in admissions, 515 black students were admitted to the incoming class.

The underrepresentation of African Americans in predominantly white institutions, juxtaposed with the success of African Americans who attend black colleges, shows that black institutions are an essential fixture in American higher education. To suggest their elimination is naive, and shows a failure to understand the opportunity that they provide to African Americans and many other students. It also ignores the lessons PWIs might learn from HBCUs about how to set high expectations for black students and how to ensure their graduation. Moreover, it fails to adhere to the spirit of *Brown*—one of providing more opportunity. Much like small colleges, single-sex institutions, military academies, and denominational schools, black colleges are an educational option that has served, and continues to serve, a portion of our population. In a post-*Brown* era—one of uncertainty with regard to admission to PWIs—many black colleges offer a culturally rich, educationally strong option and a central mission dedicated to racial uplift. ■

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Notes

[1] Figures later than 2001 are not yet available.

Figure 2. African American Baccalaureate Degrees in 2003

(all disciplines combined)

*denotes predominantly white institution

Institution	Number of African American Graduates	Percentage of Graduating Class
Florida A & M University	1408	94 percent
Howard University	1001	84 percent
Georgia State University*	885	32 percent
Southern University and A&M College	884	98 percent
North Carolina A&T University	877	98 percent
Hampton University	832	96 percent
Tennessee State University	821	83 percent
Morgan State University	758	89 percent
Temple University*	753	20 percent
Florida State University*	748	12 percent

(Data from *Black Issues in Higher Education*, June 3, 2004, vol. 21, no. 8)

Student Leaders Reflect on the Legacy of *Brown*

By Sherwynn Umali, graduate student intern, AAC&U

AS A RECENT COLLEGE GRADUATE AND ASPIRING HIGHER EDUCATION ADMINISTRATOR, I HAVE BEGUN TO LOOK CRITICALLY AT THE DYNAMICS OF THE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT BODY AND ITS EVOLUTION SINCE THE LANDMARK *BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION* DECISION. COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENTS AND LITERATURE ON THE IMPORTANCE OF CAMPUS DIVERSITY SUGGEST THAT FIFTY YEARS AFTER THE *BROWN* DECISION, DIVERSITY IS AN ENDURING VALUE OF MANY INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION; I WONDER IF IT IS A VALUE HELD BY STUDENTS. DOES THE FACT THAT *BROWN* DELIVERED A DEVASTATING BLOW TO SEGREGATION AND RACISM STILL RESONATE WITH STUDENTS TODAY? I SPOKE WITH STUDENT LEADERS ATTENDING THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND COLLEGE PARK (UMCP) TO GAIN INSIGHT INTO THEIR EXPERIENCES AND THEIR PERCEPTIONS OF DIVERSITY AND INTEGRATION AT UMCP, AND TO EXPLORE THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE LEGACY OF *BROWN*.

Student Support of Diversity

Two students generously volunteered time from their busy schedules to meet with me.[1] The first student was Denise, an African American senior majoring in computer science and Spanish. The second student was Chris, a white male in his junior year majoring in business finance. Both Denise and Chris hold leadership positions in student organizations. Both have completed some type of diversity training on campus and stated that diversity is a deeply held personal value.

Denise seemed to understand the *Brown* case and its significance in helping people of color gain access to educational equity and the rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution. With this knowledge, she was able to put her experiences regarding integration at UMCP into an historical perspective.

Chris had a very different upbringing but shared many similar college experiences with Denise. Because of his high level of involvement in campus activities, he felt that he had more experiences with diversity and integration than many of his peers. He stated, "I think a lot of students think they've experienced diversity because they fulfilled the diversity course requirement, but it's so easy to fulfill it without learning anything about why diversity is important." Chris recalled that it was not until he took an American studies course that he really learned about *Brown* and became interested in issues of civil rights, equality, and social change.

"I think a lot of students think they've experienced diversity because they fulfilled the diversity course requirement, but it's so easy to fulfill it without learning anything about why diversity is important."

Both students found it interesting that despite their affiliation with diverse groups of people, their closest friends were those who looked like themselves. Denise believes that students self-segregate "no matter how much diversity training and interaction with other races [they have] experienced." Both Denise and Chris attribute their valuing of diversity to many factors. Most significantly, they have had the opportunity to get to know people of many different backgrounds. But they have also gained new knowledge of struggles for democracy from courses they have completed. Denise adds emphatically, "I think that it's important to interact with diverse groups of people."

The legacy of *Brown* goes beyond the colors of the faces that fill our classrooms. Institutions of higher education have an opportunity, and perhaps an obligation, to foster the knowledge and motivation to create social change.

Denise and Chris are the type of engaged students seen in some of the most popular research on how students succeed in college. I believe their commitment to social justice, equity, and diversity goes hand in hand with the goals and principals of academic excellence. In my own professional work, I plan to honor these students by serving as a change agent and advocate for diversity, democracy, and inclusion. Having a sense of the history of the struggle for social justice that *Brown* provides infuses that work with deeper meaning. By incorporating this history into what we do everyday, Denise, Chris, and all of our students can be empowered to carry on that struggle. ■

Notes

[1] Names have been changed to preserve anonymity.

The Deep South Center for Environmental Justice: Education and Empowerment for an Engaged Citizenry

By Beverly Wright, director, Deep South Center for Environmental Justice, and Debra Rowe, senior fellow, Association of University Leaders for a Sustainable Future

> "Democracy required an educated populace; the survival of the earth will require an environmentally conscious citizenry. It is our job as educators to make this a reality."
>
> —*Beverly Wright*

> "I began my undergraduate studies at Xavier University as a chemistry premed major. After meeting Dr. Beverly Wright and working with the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice, I realized my true calling in life . . . working in the field of public health to help create healthier communities. As deputy director of a nonprofit organization involved in the fight against AIDS, I am keenly aware of the disparate impact AIDS and other diseases have had on the African American community. The valuable lessons learned at the center have enabled me to be a consummate change agent within the African American community, securing resources to provide services to those at greatest risk."
>
> —*Robert Swayzer III, MPH, CHES (DSCEJ Intern 1994-1996)*

Although race was clearly the central feature of the *Brown* case, income and class were its close cousins. Black students from rural and impoverished areas represented the constituency of plaintiffs in the group of cases that comprised the landmark Supreme Court case. Historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) have long prepared leaders to serve their communities and to resist and overcome the direct and residual effects of racial oppression. Xavier University in Louisiana follows in that tradition of social justice and uplift.

To think that there are communities across the South where economic conditions are reminiscent of the late-nineteenth century is hard enough, but to learn that a new and deadly enemy has crept into the picture is unthinkable for most people. This nefarious enemy of low-income, mostly rural African Americans is environmental pollution. Across the country, many of the toxic waste dump sites and the industries most dangerous to human health are located near communities of people of color and poor people.

To fight against this deadly phenomenon, a dynamic university-community alliance is emerging nationwide under the umbrella of sustainable development. With environmental justice and social equity as its goals, sustainable development seeks to create a flourishing environment, healthy communities, and strong economies. As a spur to global engagement with this issue, the United Nations has declared 2005 to 2014 the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. The Deep South Center for Environmental Justice serves as a model for how colleges and universities can work with communities to address critical environmental issues.

Mississippi River Avatar community advisory board meeting

The Deep South Center for Environmental Justice

The Deep South Center for Environmental Justice (DSCEJ) at Xavier University is one example of how a university can make a commitment to address sustainable development challenges. The center was developed in 1992 in collaboration with community environmental groups and other universities within the region to address pressing environmental justice issues. A major goal of the center has been the development of minority leadership in the struggle for environmental, social, and economic justice along the Mississippi River Corridor of Louisiana. The center's philosophy is that "Environmental justice mandates the right to ethical, balanced, and responsible uses of land and renewable resources in the interest of a sustainable planet for humans and other living things." The center concentrates its work along the Mississippi River Chemical Corridor, an eighty-five-mile stretch of land located between the cities of New Orleans and Baton Rouge, Louisiana, that is home to approximately 134 petrochemical plants and six refineries. Residents in this area bear the pollution burden for the entire state. They have suffered accordingly.

The center represents an innovative approach to addressing environmental justice issues and embraces a unique model for community-university partnerships, called "communiversity." This model emphasizes a democratically based collaborative partnership between universities and their surrounding communities. The partnership promotes bilateral understanding and mutual respect between community residents and academics. In the past, collaborative problem-solving attempts that included community residents and academics were one-sided in terms of who controlled the dynamics of the interaction, which group was perceived as having valuable knowledge, and who benefited.

Preparing Citizens for Environmental Leadership

In recent years, the center has become a powerful resource for environmental justice, education and training. It has developed curricula that are culturally sensitive and tailored to the educational and training needs of the community. Because of this work, many local residents have grown into national and international leaders, advocates, and spokespersons for environmental justice. For example, one community board member, Margie Richard, is the North American 2004 Goldman Environmental Prize winner. She is the first African American to win this prestigious prize.

Strategic Planning Clean Production follow-up meeting

The center not only promotes education and empowerment of citizens on environmental issues, but also provides practical job training for residents. In a collaborative effort, the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice at Xavier University of Louisiana, the Environmental Justice Resource Center at Clark Atlanta University, and the Trainers of the Laborers-Association of General Contractors (AGC) Education and Training Fund have successfully trained over 150 residents from environmentally at-risk urban neighborhoods in New Orleans and Atlanta.

The Role of Xavier University in Supporting Environmental Justice Initiatives

In 1992, Xavier University assumed financial responsibility for the development of the first environmental justice center at an academic institution in America. The center works with faculty and students on most of its projects. It offers scholarships to students through its environmental justice scholars and internship programs, it supports an Environmental Justice Club, it regularly conducts tours of the Mississippi River Chemical Corridor, and it hosts seminars and brown bag lunches for student and faculty development.

Xavier University's strong support for the center, while not surprising, represents a bold and unconventional step for university-community relationships. However, most of the communities the center serves are in a battle with large chemical companies and many of these companies support the university and our students through scholarships, so we must walk a fine line. Therefore, the center does not accept funds from corporations, but when they call, we encourage them to support the university and our students through scholarships. Our hope is that we can educate a more environmentally conscious citizen.

The DSCEJ was the first of five environmental justice centers to be established at HBCUs over the last ten years. Unfortunately, however, only three remain. They include the DSCEJ at Xavier University in New Orleans, the Environmental Justice Resource Center at Clark Atlanta University in Atlanta, and the Center for Environmental Equity and Justice at Florida A&M University in Tallahassee.

The DSCEJ at Xavier University has been recognized both nationally and internationally for its work. Its model is being studied for replication at other uni-

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Sustainable Development Resources

Association of University Leaders for a Sustainable Future
www.ulsf.org

The Center for Environmental Equity and Justice at Florida A&M University
www.famu.edu/acad/colleges/esi/CEEJ/CEEJ.html

The Environmental Justice Resource Center at Clark Atlanta University
www.ejrc.cau.edu

The United States Environmental Protection Agency
www.epa.gov

U.S. Partnership for the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development
www.uscdesd.org

Xavier University of Louisiana Deep South Center for Environmental Justice
www.xula.edu/dscej

Diversity at Middlesex Community College

By Walter Clark, director of admissions, Middlesex Community College

BROWN STOOD FOR THE PROPOSITION THAT "ABSENT COMPELLING STATE INTEREST," THE EQUAL PROTECTION CLAUSE OF THE CONSTITUTION PROHIBITS PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS FROM DISCRIMINATING IN ADMISSIONS ON THE BASIS OF RACE. *BROWN* PUSHED OPEN THE DOOR OF OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENSHIP AND DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS FOR AFRICAN AMERICANS AND OTHER GROUPS DEEMED "MINORITIES," AND HELPED TO LAUNCH THE MASS SOCIAL AND POLITICAL MOVEMENTS OF THE 1950S, 1960S, AND 1970S. *BROWN* AFFECTED MY LIFE IN MANY WAYS AND IT CONTINUES TO HAVE AN INFLUENCE ON MY WORK AT MIDDLESEX COMMUNITY COLLEGE IN MIDDLETOWN, CONNECTICUT. PERHAPS MY PERSONAL BACKGROUND PREPARED ME TO EMBRACE CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND THE SPIRIT OF *BROWN*.

I am biracial. My mother is Japanese and my father is African American. In effect, my parents were equal-opportunity daters who came of age during the early years of the *Brown* decision. I grew up in my father's old neighborhood in the South Bronx. Growing up biracial in the South Bronx shaped my life and outlook on the world. It gave me the strength to navigate my postsecondary educational experiences in predominately white institutions. Even today, the underlying principles of *Brown* continue to influence my professional practice.

Diversity at Middlesex

In many ways, the community college model is ideally suited to create educational opportunities for a broad cross-section of learners. At Middlesex Community College, as at many other community colleges across the country, access, diversity, affordability, and quality are intrinsic to the institutional mission.

I am proud of the fact that at Middlesex Community College, where I serve as director of admissions and an adjunct faculty member in sociology, we are collectively and individually fulfilling the purposes of *Brown*. For example, in 1997, an institutional commitment to diversity initiatives at Middlesex Community College began with a minority participation plan. This comprehensive plan included:

- enhanced recruitment and retention efforts of diverse student populations;
- increased recruitment efforts of a diverse faculty and staff;
- invitations to diverse community members to serve on all college advisory groups.

Under the leadership of Middlesex's president, Wilfredo Nieves, and with the firm support of faculty and staff, the diversity initiatives have materialized into specific programs aimed at preparing students to succeed in the complex and diverse world in which we live. As part of that commitment, Dr. Nieves started the President's Committee on Diversity (PCOD).

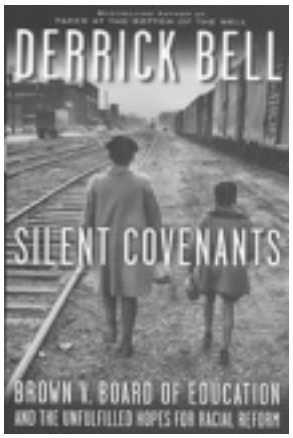
The importance of incorporating diversity into the curriculum cannot be overlooked or ignored. It enriches teaching and learning and promotes critical thinking for all students.

Moreover, our curriculum now requires faculty to include elements of diversity in certain required courses. Our admission policy also reflects a commitment to diversity. We understand that some groups require more encouragement and contact. Therefore, we not only recruit from traditional sources such as the local high schools, but we also visit the unemployment office, community-based nonprofit organizations, and adult education centers. Since 2002, with the full support of faculty, staff, and students, we have successfully sponsored a Hispanic College/Career Fair. Recently, under the leadership of Dr. Nieves, we have begun an internationalization of the campus, which includes increasing the recruitment of international students and developing programs to address their needs and interests.

The importance of incorporating diversity into the curriculum cannot be overlooked or ignored. It enriches teaching and learning and promotes critical thinking for all students. At Middlesex, this pedagogy is recognized, validated, and put into practice. Without *Brown v. Board of Education*, America would not be engaging with diversity in the manner we see today, and I cringe at the notion of what "separate but equal" would look like in 2004. The legacy of *Brown* is honored whenever we engage in constructive dialogue and forward-thinking activities that promote democratic equity. ■

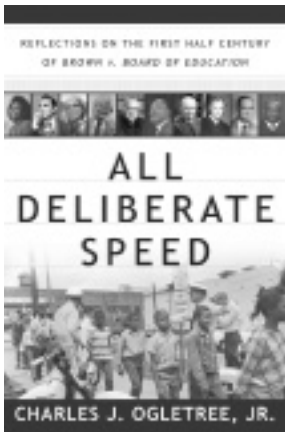
Books on *Brown v. Board of Education*

Silent Covenants:* Brown v. Board of Education *and the Unfulfilled Hopes for Racial Reform, by Derrick Bell. (Oxford University Press, 2004.)

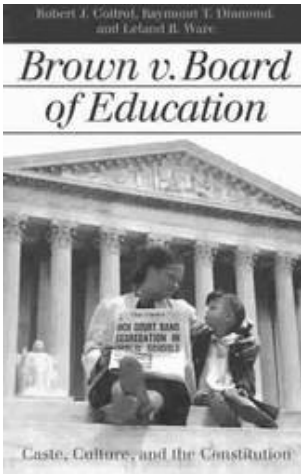


Bell argues that because of the perversity of racism, *Brown v. Board of Education* undermined rather than advanced the educational interests of black children. Although he acknowledges that striking down the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* "separate but equal" mandate was a monumental action, Bell claims that little was done to enforce the equality side of the equation between racial communities. Bell argues that the importance of the landmark *Brown* decision lies more in the ruling's symbolic value than in its substance. The road to equal educational opportunity has proven to be longer and more difficult than many had hoped.

***All Deliberate Speed: Reflections of the First Half-Century of* Brown v. Board of Education,** by Charles J. Ogletree. (W. W. Norton & Company, 2004.)



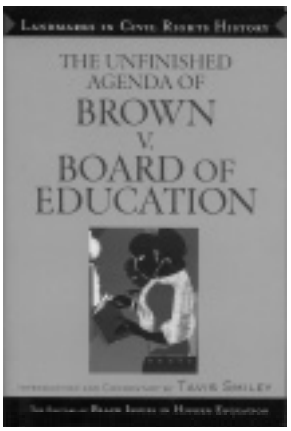
Harvard law professor Charles Ogletree analyzes the impact of the Supreme Court's unanimous ruling that "separate but equal" was unconstitutional. He also examines the meaning of *Brown* for all Americans by describing the lives and roles of those involved, including Martin Luther King, Jr., Earl Warren, and Thurgood Marshall. The synthesis of historical and personal accounts makes this book central to understanding the impact and the legacy of *Brown* on American society.



Brown v. Board of Education: *Caste, Culture, and the Constitution,* edited by Robert J. Cottrol and Leland Ware. (University Press of Kansas, 2003.)

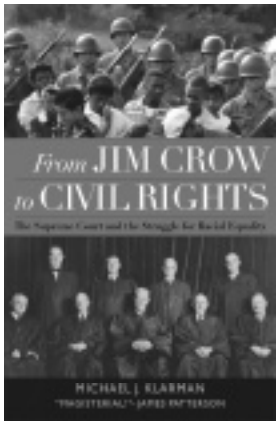
This book examines the court cases involved in the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. It focuses on the fundamental role that the NAACP played in bringing about the Supreme Court's decision to overturn the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* "separate but equal" doctrine. The authors craft their story to show that *Brown* changed the national equation of race and caste and our view of the Court's role in American life.

***The Unfinished Agenda of* Brown v. Board of Education,** by the editors of *Black Issues in Higher Education* with James Anderson, Dara N. Bryne, and Tavis Smiley. (John Wiley & Sons, 2004.)



The editors of *Black Issues in Higher Education* collaborated with a diverse group of activists, jurists, educators, scholars, and theorists to create this collection of essays. Contributors such as Derrick Bell, Cheryl Brown Henderson, Evelyn Hu DeHart, and Gary Orfield share a range of perspectives on the meaning and influence of *Brown* decision and the ensuing transformation of the United States over the past fifty years. It is the collection of many voices that makes this book profound and powerful. The essays provide both historical and personal perspectives on *Brown v. Board of Education.*

From Jim Crow to Civil Rights: The Supreme Court and the Struggle for Racial Equality, by Michael J. Klarman. (Oxford University Press, 2004.)



This book delves deeply into constitutional law on race from the nineteenth century through the mid-twentieth century and considers the social and political milieu of the *Brown* decision. Professor Klarman examines the dynamic social and legal tensions affecting southern politics, the civil rights movement, and the subsequent national reactions that led to the civil rights legislation of the 1960s. Well researched and skillfully crafted, it is a book that reveals the powerful effects of the Supreme Court upon the American landscape.

University of South Carolina Upstate *continued from page 3*

institutions in the Southeast (1998-2003). Upstate has achieved recognition as the organizational leader in diversity and international initiatives across South Carolina, and has received several statewide awards from civic organizations in recognition of its commitment to diversity and inclusion.

It is hard to conceive of any of these changes without the landmark *Brown* decision. The focus on inclusion, diversity, and community is a result of the struggles of many people. We believe that students who attend and graduate from Upstate are rewarded with much more than a college degree. They are prepared for productive citizenship in an increasingly pluralistic society and shrinking global environment. Upstate is a model for other institutions seeking to create excellent and diverse environments in which to live, learn, teach, and lead. Our roots are southern and we are proud of what *Brown* did for the country and for our institution. ■

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A Search for Deep Diversity in the Communication Classroom

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best places to develop this skill is in college. Colleges and universities are places where students who have most likely been segregated throughout their elementary and secondary years come together, often for the first time. We cannot afford to have this opportunity to cultivate cultural understanding slip away.

The Paradigm of Inclusiveness provides an ideological space where we help ourselves and our students engage in a complex dialogue about world cultures.

Communication courses are not the only ones that have the potential to facilitate intercultural learning and communication across differences for college students. The examination of culture and intercultural dialogue can become common elements of many kinds of courses. Students can be encouraged to investigate not only the meaning of terms like culture, race, and diversity, but also how to seek a better understanding of their own lives and their present and future place in the world. Such new capacities are a byproduct of *Brown*, which presented the opportunity to expand the conversation beyond race to the influence that ethnicity and culture have on ideas of democracy, citizenship, and social equity. ■

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The Deep South Center for Environmental Justice

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versities in the United States. At least two or three large universities from across the country visit the center each year to learn how to work successfully with communities on these issues. We are particularly proud of the environmental justice curricula that the center developed, which 225 New Orleans public school teachers were trained to use. The DSCEJ is committed to the struggle for environmental justice and will continue its fight through education to win social and environmental justice for black people in the Deep South. The spirit of *Brown* lives on in the center's mission and work. ■

AAC&U Membership

If your address label on this issue of Diversity Digest has the letters NMI or NMPC on the top line, then your campus is missing important benefits, particularly related to AAC&U's initiatives in the office of Diversity, Equity, and Global Initiatives. Contact Esther S. Merves (202-884-7435 or merves@aacu.org) for membership information.

About AAC&U

AAC&U is the leading national association concerned with the quality, vitality, and public standing of undergraduate liberal education. Its members are committed to extending the advantages of a liberal education to all students, regardless of academic specialization or intended career. Since its founding in 1915, AAC&U's membership has grown to more than 975 accredited public and private colleges and universities of every type and size.

AAC&U functions as a catalyst and facilitator, forging links among presidents, administrators, and faculty members who are engaged in institutional and curricular planning. Its mission is to reinforce the collective commitment to liberal education at both the national and local levels and to help individual institutions keep the quality of student learning at the core of their work as they evolve to meet new economic and social challenges.

Information about AAC&U membership, programs, and publications can be found at www.aacu.org.

From AAC&U Board Statement on Liberal Learning

AAC&U believes that by its nature...liberal learning is global and pluralistic. It embraces the diversity of ideas and experiences that characterize the social, natural, and intellectual world. To acknowledge such diversity in all its forms is both an intellectual commitment and a social responsibility, for nothing less will equip us to understand our world and to pursue fruitful lives.

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