

Resegregation of the Nation's Public Schools: The Problem for the 21st Century and Beyond

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Abstract

This paper argues that the nation's public schools, with some exceptions, will remain segregated during the twenty-first century and beyond due to the pervasive undying and deeply entrenched racial attitudes and behavioral propensities that make up the American ethos. Race has played a particularly central role in the area of education, as the nation has confronted an enduring struggle to desegregate its public schools. The tactics examined to thwart the implementation of Brown v. Board of Education are an integral part of America's deeply entrenched racial attitudes and historical experience as well as a crucial part of its culture. The historical and contemporary evidence presented here shows quite clearly that the certainty of racism and segregated schools is on par with the certainty of taxes and death. This reality will unfortunately remain a permanent feature of American society for many years in the future.

"The battle against pernicious racial discrimination or its effects is no where near won."

-Justice Thurgood Marshall, Dissenting in *City of Richmond v. J.A. Croson Company* (1989)

"One wonders whether the majority still believes that race discrimination or, more accurately, race discrimination against non-whites is a problem in our society, or even remembers that it ever was."

Justice Harry Blackmon, Dissenting in *Wards Cove Packing Company v. Antonio* (1989)

The Significance of Race in Desegregation Policy Making

Race continues to be one of the most pervasive and persistent issues in the United States. As Derrick Bell observed, in his book *And We Are Not Saved* (1987), “At no time has race slipped far down the list of the most crucial matters facing...the nation’s top policy makers and its most humble citizens” (p.4). One area in which race has played a particularly central role is that of education, as the nation has confronted an enduring struggle to desegregate its public schools. This paper argues that the nation’s public schools, with some exceptions, will remain segregated during the twenty-first century and beyond, due to the pervasive, undying and deeply entrenched racial attitudes and behavioral propensities that make up the American ethos.

The methodological approach will be historical and analytic, drawing upon Critical Race Theory, which originated in the mid-1970’s and can be largely credited to Derrick Bell, a former law professor at Harvard University. It is important to emphasize at the outset that Critical Race Theory’s innovative perspective questions the nation’s commitment and willingness to transform a deeply divided and segregated society, which is nourished by racism and deeply rooted and entrenched in the nation’s political culture. As Bell (1992) states:

What appears to be progress toward racial justice is, in fact, a cyclical process. Barriers are lowered in one era only to reveal a new set of often more sophisticated but no less effective processes that maintain blacks in a subordinate status (p. 3).

Following a favorable decision such as the 1954 Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, minimal progress has been followed by setbacks, resulting in a vicious no-win cycle and making Supreme Court mandates painfully slow in implementation and enforcement. The cyclical nature of racial progress that Bell

pinpoints helps to explain why the vast majority of American public schools, including those that were successfully integrated for a time, now face resegregation.

This should not come as a surprise to anyone familiar with public opinion in the United States. Surveys concerning busing, housing discrimination, affirmative action, employment discrimination, and disparate treatment of blacks and whites in the criminal justice system reveal vast differences in the opinions of individuals based on race. Ellis Cose observed, in *The Media in Black and White* (1997), that perceptions differ tremendously due to the different experiences racial groups have encountered. For example, in a June 1997 poll, the differences between the opinions of blacks and whites concerning expanding affirmative action programs were striking. Fifty three percent of blacks favored expanding these programs compared to 22% of whites (Wilson & Dilulio, 1999). Marcus Pohlmann, in his book *Black Politics: Conservative America* (1999), observed the following striking differences in perceptions between blacks and whites on a number of salient issues:

Are blacks generally discriminated against in getting a quality education?

Whites: 11% Yes Blacks: 37% Yes

Do blacks receive Equal treatment in the Justice System?

Whites: 61% Yes Blacks: 20% Yes

Compared with whites, blacks have equal or greater opportunity for promotion to supervisory or managerial jobs?

Whites: 78% Yes Blacks: 44% Yes

Should every possible effort be made to help minorities?

Whites: 25% Yes Blacks: 61% Yes

Has the United States gone “too far” in pushing equal rights?

Whites: 51% Yes

Blacks: 26% Yes

In order to understand these lasting racial discrepancies and the related segregation that continues to plague our public schools, it is necessary to trace the recent history of these issues in the United States.

The Legal Attack on Segregated Public Schools

More than 50 years after its decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537 (1896), the Supreme Court was afforded the opportunity to revisit its separate-but-equal doctrine in the case of *Brown v. Board of Education*. The NAACP spent many hours planning the strongest attack possible against segregated schools, using both legal arguments and available social science evidence. Thurgood Marshall was one of many lawyers who worked on the case. Kenneth Clark, a social scientist from City College in New York, provided the NAACP with his expertise.

The *Brown* case was a joinder of four cases arising in Kansas, Virginia, Delaware, and South Carolina.¹ A fifth case involved segregation of the public schools in the District of Columbia (*Bolling v. Sharpe*, 347 U.S. 497 [1954]). These cases initially reached the Supreme Court during its 1952 term. Just before the Eisenhower inauguration, President Harry S. Truman demonstrated his support for equality goals by permitting the Justice Department to file an amicus curiae brief in the *Brown* litigation. The administration had previously submitted amicus briefs in *Sweatt v. Painter* (1950) and *McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education* (1950), arguing it was constitutionally impermissible for colleges and universities to discriminate against black students.

¹ See *Brown v. Board of Education*; *Davis v. County School Board of Prince Edward County*; and *Belton v. Gebhart*. In *Briggs v. Elliott*, the three-judge district court found that the black schools were inferior to the white schools and ordered the defendants to begin immediately to equalize the facilities, but the court denied the plaintiffs' admission to the white schools during the equalization process. On remand, the district court found that substantial equality had been achieved except for buildings and that the defendants were proceeding to rectify this inequality as well. See *Brown* (1954), pp.486-487.

In its amicus curiae brief in the *Brown* litigation, the federal government called for an end to racial segregation in the nation's public school system, emphasizing the foreign policy implications of segregation in the United States as a provider of “grist for the Communist propaganda mills” (as cited in Kurland & Casper, 1975). The government summed up its position in the following manner:

[T]he doctrine of “separate-but-equal” is an unwarranted departure, based upon dubious assumptions of fact combined with a disregard of the basic purposes of the Fourteenth Amendment, from the fundamental principle that all Americans, whatever their race or color, stand equal and alike before the law. The rule of stare decisis does not give it immunity from reexamination and rejection (as cited in Kurland & Casper, 1975, pp. 140-141).

It is extremely important to emphasize that while the Truman administration filed this brief in support of *Brown*, the decision itself did not necessarily represent the genuine feelings of the vast majority of white Americans or the U.S. Government as a whole. There is absolutely no evidence to suggest that whites and the federal government felt the decision was a moral imperative. What was at stake was not a normative belief in racial equality but rather the international image of the United States. The continuation of pervasive discrimination and segregation in the United States would make it extremely difficult to boast that our political system was superior to that of other nations and would provide communist nations with the ammunition they needed to exploit this contradiction. The amicus curiae brief prepared by the Justice Department expressed the dilemma facing the nation in these words:

The shameful and absurdity of Washington's treatment of Negro Americans is highlighted by the presence of many dark-skinned foreign visitors... Foreign officials are often mistaken for American Negroes and refused food, lodging and

entertainment...The United States is trying to prove to the people of the world that a free democracy is the most civilized and most secure form of government yet devised by man...The existence of discrimination against minority groups in the United States has an adverse effect upon our relations with other countries. Racial discrimination...raises doubts even among friendly nations as to the intensity of our devotion to the democratic faith (Fisher, 2000, pp. 882-883).

Oral arguments in *Brown* began on December 9, 1952, and a philosophically divided Vinson Court was unable to reach a consensus on the cases prior to the end of its term. According to Richard Kluger's (2004) account, Justice Frankfurter suggested that the Court prepare questions for reargument so that the cases could be held over until the next term. On June 8, 1953, all five cases were unanimously restored to the Court's docket, and the parties to the litigation were asked to discuss five questions related to the history and purpose of the Fourteenth Amendment.² The Court also invited

2. The five questions of the *Brown* litigation (1953) were:

1. What evidence is there that the Congress that submitted and the state legislatures and conventions that ratified the Fourteenth Amendment contemplated or did not contemplate, understood or did not understand, that it would abolish segregation in the public schools?
2. If neither the Congress in submitting nor the states in ratifying the Fourteenth Amendment understood that compliance with it would require the immediate abolition of segregation in public schools, was it nevertheless the understanding of the framers of the Amendment
 - (a) that future Congresses might in the exercise of their power under Section 5 of the amendment, abolish segregation, or
 - (b) that is would be within the judicial power, in light of future conditions, to construe the Amendment as abolishing such segregation of its own force?
3. On the assumption that the answers to questions 2(a) and (b) do not dispose of the issue, it is within the judicial power, in construing the Amendment, to abolish segregation in public schools?
4. Assuming it is decided that segregation in public schools violates the Fourteenth Amendment
 - (a) would a decree necessarily follow providing that, within the limits set by normal geographical school districting, Negro children should forthwith be admitted to schools of their choice, or
 - (b) may this Court, in the exercise of its equity powers, permit an effective gradual adjustment to be brought about from existing segregated systems to a system not based on color distinction?

the Attorney General of the United States to take part in the oral argument and to file an additional brief.

On September 8, 1953, prior to reargument, Chief Justice Vinson died of a heart attack and was subsequently replaced by Earl Warren. Oral arguments were heard on December 7, 1953. The evidence that the lawyers were able to assemble after months of painstaking research led the Warren Court to conclude that the historical evidence was too inconclusive to allow for a clear-cut answer. Some scholars, however, disagree with the Court's opinion on this matter. Although very little was said about segregation during the debates in Congress, Alexander Bickel, a legal scholar and former law clerk to Justice Frankfurter, argued that § 1 of the Fourteenth Amendment was written in broad language so that individuals in the future would be able "to interpret it as prohibiting the practice of segregation" (Bickel, 1955, p. 134).

Unlike President Truman, President Eisenhower offered limited support for school integration. He initially opposed the Justice Department's filing of a brief in the *Brown* case (Burk, 1984). Attorney General Herbert Brownell, Jr. convinced President Eisenhower it would be difficult for the administration to dodge the school segregation controversy because the Truman administration in 1952 had filed a brief in support of the black plaintiffs. The Eisenhower administration failed to take a clear stance on the crucial issue before the Court—whether the framers of the Fourteenth Amendment intended to abolish racial segregation in education. According to Robert Burk's (1984) account, the 180-page brief was so vague that members of the Supreme Court complained

5. On the assumption on which questions 4 (a) and (b) are based, and assuming further that this Court will exercise its equity powers to the end described in question 4(b)
 - (a) should this Court formulate detailed decrees in these cases:
 - (b) If so, what specific issues should the decrees reach:
 - (c) should this Court appoint a special master to hear evidence with a view to recommending specific terms for such decrees:
 - (d) should this Court remand to the courts of first instance with directions to frame decrees in these cases, and if so, what general directions should the decrees of this Court include and what procedures should the courts of first instance follow in arriving at the specific terms of more detailed decrees?
- SOURCE: *Brown v. Board of Education*, 345 U.S. 972, 972-973 (1953).

they did not understand the federal government's position and thus requested that Justice Department officials make clear what stance they were adopting in *Brown*.³ Burk suggested that the Eisenhower administration submitted a nebulous brief because it wanted to avoid the political pitfall of aggressively taking a pro-civil rights stance as Truman did, resulting in Southerners walking out of the 1948 Democratic convention. Nor did President Eisenhower want to take the political risk of coming out against *Brown* and appearing to be anti-civil rights.

On May 17, 1954, the Warren Court relied on legal and non-legal materials to support its decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) (*Brown I*). The Fourteenth Amendment was the legal basis for the decision. Chief Justice Warren, writing for a unanimous Court, declared, "We conclude that in the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place...Therefore, we hold that the plaintiffs. . . are...deprived of the equal protection of the laws guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment." The Court then turned to non-legal or social science materials. It quoted findings that were presented in the district court in the Kansas case that coincided with the opinion of Dr. Kenneth Clark. Chief Justice Earl Warren observed:

Segregation of white and colored children in public schools has a detrimental effect upon the colored children. The impact is greater when it has the sanction of the law; for the policy of separating the races is usually interpreted as denoting the inferiority of the Negro group. A sense of inferiority affects the motivation of a child to learn.

An important factor in the opinion was the now-famous Footnote 11⁴, which referred to studies by various sociologists and psychologists

³ Shortly thereafter, the Justice Department filed a brief stating that although it was impossible to draw a definitive conclusion regarding the framers' intention of the Fourteenth Amendment and racial discrimination in education, the legislative history of the Fourteenth Amendment suggested that the Congress that proposed it understood, not that the Fourteenth Amendment would abolish segregated schools, but that it forbade all legal distinctions based on color (Burk, 1984).

⁴ The famous Footnote Number 11 in *Brown I* appeared in the decision as follows: K. B. Clark,

concerning the detrimental effects of segregation on black children. The Court then restored the cases to its docket for the following term in order to formulate the appropriate remedy.

The Emergence of Resegregated Public Schools

Fifty-five years after this landmark decision was rendered, resegregation is the norm in U.S. public schools, raising questions about the impact of the *Brown* decision. The first decade following *Brown I* was a dismal failure in terms of implementing the letter as well as the spirit of this decision, especially in the South. After all, the decision's mandate threatened to change the mores of this region of the country, and resistance was immense. For example, in Atlanta, Georgia, the mandate of *Brown I* was completely ignored for approximately seven years (through 1961), and many southern school systems outside of Atlanta and in other southern states prevented the reality of integrated schools for some years following 1961 (Sowell, 1981). John Sibley, who had served as General Counsel for the Coca Cola Company and as President of Trust Company Bank in Atlanta, was appointed by Georgia Governor Ernest Vandiver to head the Georgia Committee on Schools in 1961, which was charged with determining how the state would respond to the *Brown* decision (Roche, 1998). Hearings were held in the ten congressional districts of Georgia and approximately 1,600 witnesses were heard. Sibley, a segregationist, recommended "restructured resistance," which would result in defying the mandate of *Brown I* and ensuring "maximum segregation under the law..." (Roche, 1998, p. 188).

Other Southern political leaders were equally determined to defy the *Brown* mandate. Resistance to and defiance of the law of

Effect of Prejudice and Discrimination on Personality Development (Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth, 1950; Witmer and Kotinsky, Personality in the Making (1952), c. VI; Deutscher and Chein, The Psychological Effects of Enforced Segregation: A Survey of Social Science Opinion, 26 J. Psychol. 259 (1948); Chein, What are the Psychological Effects of Segregation Under Conditions of Equal Facilities?, 3 Int. J. Opinion and Attitude Res. 229 (1949); Brameld, Educational Costs, in Discrimination and National Welfare (MacIver, ed., 1949), 44-48; Frazier, The Negro in the United States (1949), 674- 681. And see generally Myrdal, An American Dilemma (1944).

SOURCE: *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483, 494-495 (1954)

the land by public officials and bureaucrats has historically been a serious problem in dealing with matters of race (Sowell, 1981).

Following *Brown I*, United States Representatives and Senators led the way in defying its mandate. Nineteen senators and 77 House members signed a statement prepared by Senators Harry Byrd (Virginia) and Richard Russell (Georgia), charging that the United States Supreme Court had abused its authority and encroached on rights reserved for the states (Roche, 1998). According to C. Vann Woodward, within two years of the *Brown* decision, Southern states had enacted 106 evasive legal measures to prevent blacks from attending integrated schools (Woodward, 1974). Incrementalism, stubborn resistance and official and public defiance were the norm. It should, therefore, not be surprising that ten years following *Brown I*, only 2% of black children attended schools with whites in the South (Rosenberg, (1991).

The 1955 *Brown II* mandate that public schools desegregate “with all deliberate speed” actually resulted in all deliberate delay, as the executive branch sidestepped its awesome responsibility of insuring equal justice under law with intentional and unnecessary ambiguity. The fundamental right to equal educational opportunity was seriously eroded to placate the South and provide it with enough wiggle room to proceed as it saw fit. Implementation was also delayed by the appointment of federal judges who espoused racist views.

Blacks, who overwhelmingly supported John F. Kennedy for President in 1960, were dismayed and disappointed when he appointed judges from Louisiana, Georgia and Mississippi, all of whom were regarded as racists. William Harold Cox, appointed to the district court in Mississippi, was regarded as the worst of these appointments, in part for referring to blacks as “chimpanzees” (Jackson, 1974). In one case involving six freedom riders who sought to remove their case to a federal district court, Cox wrote, “This court may not be regarded as any haven for any such counterfeit

citizens from other states deliberately seeking to cause trouble here among its people” (*Brown v. State of Mississippi*, 1961).

Judge E. Gordon West, a Kennedy appointee from Louisiana, had the following to say after ordering the city of Baton Rouge to devise a school desegregation plan: “I personally regard the 1954 holding of the Supreme Court in the now famous *Brown*...case as one of the truly regrettable decisions of all time” (Lewis, 1963, p.8). J. Robert Elliott, a Kennedy appointee from Georgia, opposed efforts to end rural domination in Georgia. He observed, “I don’t want these pinks, radicals and black voters to outvote those who are trying to preserve segregation laws and other traditions” (Lewis, 1963, p. 8).

In spite of these challenges facing the desegregation of public schools, particularly in the South, progress did occur between 1964 and 1988. Erwin Chemerinsky (2005) described the changes in racial composition of Southern public schools in these words:

From 1964 to 1988, however, significant progress occurred: the figure [percentage of African American students attending school with white students] grew to 13.9 percent in 1967, 23.4 percent in 1968, 37.6 percent in 1976, 42.9 percent in 1986 and 43.5 percent in 1998. (p. 29).

It is somewhat ironic that public schools in the South were more desegregated compared to other regions of the country in the 1970’s before resegregation took hold in the late 1980’s. The 1964 Civil Rights Law, which prohibited discrimination in schools receiving federal dollars, had a positive impact on the enforcement of desegregation. The possibility of losing federal funds was perhaps the most salient factor for desegregation gains. These gains were slowed significantly, however, by the election of Richard Nixon as President in 1968. Rather than using his position to see that the law was faithfully executed, Nixon used his presidential power to defy the spirit as well as the letter of not only *Brown I* but also the 1971 *Swann* decision regarding busing. He condemned

court-ordered busing as “forced busing,” a sentiment echoed by the Reagan administration after its defeat of President Carter in 1980. The predominant mood in the country at that time encouraged states to enact measures to curb busing remedies for de facto segregation. This mood, combined with three key Supreme Court decisions [*Board of Education of Oklahoma v. Dowell* (1991), *Freeman v. Pitts* (1992) and *Missouri v. Jenkins* (1995)], white public opinion, deeply entrenched and unwavering racial attitudes, and silence and inaction on the part of public officials and school administrators, literally dictated a return to segregated public schools, especially in the South.

Gary Orfield has observed that the progress that took place from 1964-1988 in the South was literally lost during the decade of 1988 to 1998 (Orfield, 1996). His analysis shows quite clearly that what occurred for blacks also occurred for Latino/a students. Official resistance to genuine desegregation took the form of pupil placement laws, freedom of choice plans, school closing laws, whites transferring to private schools, anti-barratry laws and weak enforcement efforts. Orfield (1996) notes that the most segregated Latino/a and African-American schools predominantly serve underprivileged children, while 96 percent of white schools are populated by “middle-class majorities.” Additionally, between 1986 and 1991 the number of schools that were 90-100 percent black actually increased. Orfield’s data also show that during the 1990’s, the number of black students in majority white schools decreased to its 1968 level.

New York, Michigan, Illinois and New Jersey were the most segregated states for black students for more than a decade; for Latino/a students it was the Northeast, Chicago, California and Texas. Orfield (1996) emphasizes that the high levels of segregation in many sections of the urban North are being replicated with resegregated schools in the south. He makes the following observation concerning the resegregation of the nation’s public schools:

In the big central cities, fifteen of every sixteen African American and Latino students are in schools where most of the students are nonwhite. In the smaller central cities, 63 percent of African Americans and 70 percent of Latinos attend such schools (Orfield, 1996).

New York has had the highest level of segregation for Latinos/as for the last generation (Orfield, 1996).

Study after study (see Kozol, 2005; Frankenberg, 2005; Orfield, 1976; Stephan & Feagin, 1980) confirms the resegregation of the nation’s public schools in Austin, Texas; Detroit, Michigan; Norfolk, Virginia; Charlotte, North Carolina; Atlanta, Georgia; Montgomery County, Maryland and many other school districts throughout the nation. The data presented in all of these studies illustrate the cyclical pattern that Derrick Bell (1992) pinpointed and helps to explain why progress towards genuinely desegregated public schools has been so painfully slow and why far too many of the nation’s public schools are still separate and vastly unequal fifty two years after *Brown I*.

Jonathan Kozol in his book, *The Shame of the Nation* (2005), states, “There is a new emboldenment among the relative privileged to isolate their children as completely as they can from more than token numbers of the children of minorities” (p. 135). The persistence and longevity of this pattern makes it extremely difficult to agree with some individuals who predict victory over segregated public schools in the not too distant future. The historical pattern instead leads me to conclude that segregated public schools will continue to be one of the most pressing social problems facing the American polity in the twenty-first century and beyond.

Evidence for this view includes the 2002 enactment of the No Child Left Behind Act. This law requires each state to test students each year and entitles students at failing schools to transfer to other public schools of their choosing, leaving the district with

the responsibility of paying transportation costs (Ouchi, 2003). It is self-evident that corrective measures can produce disastrous results when decisions are made on the basis of politics and race rather than what is just and in the best interest of all parties. Gary Orfield (2005) commented on the failure of the Act in these words:

The No Child Left Behind Act... is a classic example of a policy that sounds a ringing affirmation of minority rights but ends up undermining desegregation and punishing the schools and children that are the worst victims of segregation by race and poverty... Because the act sets a single achievement goal and requires that all schools progress at the same rate, the formula has the perverse impact of imposing far tougher achievement requirements on schools that start for behind... The policy sounds good but ends up punishing the victims of segregation yet another time (pp. 12-13).

The more recent Supreme Court decision, *Parents Involved In Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1* (2007), provides additional evidence of the twenty first century resegregation of public schools. A deeply divided court (Chief Justice John Roberts writing for a 5-4 majority) held that public schools cannot maintain integration or district diversity through programs that use students' race in school assignments. Justice Roberts observed that the plans that were implemented employed a very limited conception of diversity by regarding race overwhelmingly in white v. nonwhite terms. The respective plans failed to consider race as an integral part "of a broader effort to achieve 'exposure to widely diverse people, cultures...and viewpoints.'" Additionally, the majority opinion emphasized that the respective plans failed to provide for "a meaningful individualized review." Thurgood Marshall, in his dissenting opinion in *Milliken v. Bradley* (1974), observed that the Court had taken "a giant step backwards." His observation is equally applicable to the *Parents Involved In Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1* decision, another unfortunate blow to *Brown I*.

Additionally, in Tuscaloosa Alabama, school authorities developed extensive rezoning plans for the district in 2007 in response to an outcry by white parents that the schools had become overcrowded. All but a few of the black students were required to move from high performing schools to those categorized as low performing (Dillon, 2007). Black parents have argued that this violates the No Child Left Behind Act, which provides for students to move from failing schools to high performing ones rather than vice versa. The Board President and School Superintendent, both white, pointed out that the rezoning plan was essentially a color-blind effort to relieve overcrowding by reorganizing the approximately 10,000 students who attend community schools. Dr. Joyce Levey, the Superintendent, observed that those students who were rezoned to move from a high- to a low-performing school were informed of their right under the No Child Left Behind Law to request a transfer. The fundamental problem, however, is that there are limited spaces available in the high-performing schools, which is the primary reason the rezoning plan was implemented in the first place.

Summary and Conclusion

A plethora of Supreme Court decisions, beginning with *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) and culminating with *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1* (2007), pinpoint quite clearly the significant role race has played historically in African Americans' quest for genuine educational equality. The historical and contemporary evidence presented here shows quite clearly that the certainty of racism and segregated schools is on par with the certainty of taxes and death. Regrettably, African Americans need to accept this reality to avoid the continuation of unnecessary disappointment and disillusionment. This does not mean that they should not continue to struggle toward the desired outcomes they seek; instead, they should target their struggle for what is possible in light of the evidence and lessons of history. The evidence supports why the segregation of the nation's public schools, with some exception, will be a permanent feature of American society for the 21st century and beyond. Critical Race Theory is a sine qua non

for understanding this harsh reality holistically. After all, Critical Race Theorists' innovative perspective questioned the nation's commitment to transform a deeply divided and segregated society which was nourished by racism and deeply rooted in the nation's political culture.

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