

The Brown Quarterly

Quarterly Newsletter for Classroom Teachers

Volume 6 No. 4

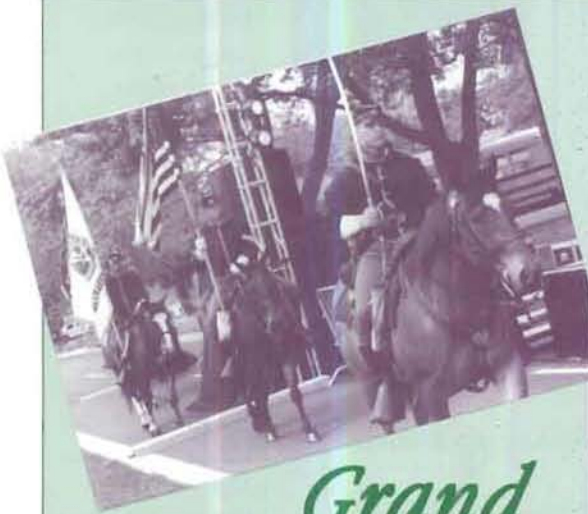
50th Anniversary Commemorative Issue

Spring 2005

Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site

An Eventful Day for a Historic Occasion

U.S. Army, Fort Riley Honor Guard parades and raises the colors as 312th U.S. Army Band, Lawrence, Kansas, plays the Star Spangled Banner.



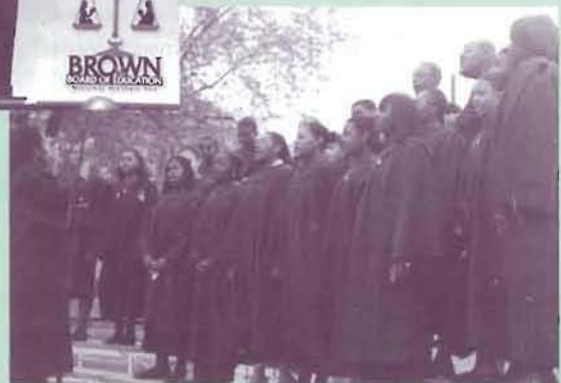
Grand Opening



George W. Bush,
President of the
United States
gives the keynote
address.



Michelle Williams and the Williams Magnet School Choir,
Topeka, Kansas, singing *Lift Every Voice and Sing*.



16th Street Baptist Church Choir,
Birmingham, Alabama, singing *Let There
Be Peace on Earth*.

May 17, 2004

A Personal Perspective

With the grand opening of *Brown v. Board of Education* National Historic Site, we commemorate the courage of ordinary people who would not be denied their constitutional rights. Their efforts profoundly impacted the lives of every citizen and influenced human rights struggles around the world.

Over the past 50 years, we have witnessed the passing of attorneys, community activists and plaintiffs involved in the five cases that comprise the *Brown* decision. The loss of Thurgood Marshall seemed to signal the end of an era. With the passing of this living history the Brown Foundation understood the urgent need to research and preserve their contributions. We are grateful for individuals from this state and representatives in Congress who supported our mission to resurrect and share the *Brown* story.

The campaign to establish a permanent interpretative site led us on a journey of discovery. We gained an awareness that African Americans fought for equal educational opportunity as early as 1849 in Massachusetts. We discovered that in order to open freedom's door in Kansas, African Americans began court challenges to end segregated schools as early as 1881. Our country is indebted to the work of great institutions such as the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc., Howard University and the NAACP.

In May, our vision became reality. Visitors to the *Brown v. Board of Education* National Historic Site will come face to face with the true history makers who are ministers, laborers, homemakers, educators, club women, lodge members, people from all walks of life who got involved simply to ensure greater opportunity for the next generation.

On May 17, 1954, when the U.S. Supreme Court rendered the *Brown* decision, we would begin to experience decades of unprecedented social change. It is clear that our country is entering an era of universal racial, ethnic and cultural diversity. With this new pluralism comes added responsibility for education as a tool for social equality.

The Brown Foundation is honored to have played a role in the creation of the *Brown v. Board of Education* National Historic Site, an important living educational legacy, a testament to the triumph of the human spirit.

Reflections on *Brown v. Board*



by
**Cheryl Brown
Henderson**
President
Brown Foundation

The Brown Foundation is pleased to publish this newsletter for classroom teachers through which we will share resources available from national parks and museums. Established to maintain the legacy of the *Brown* decision, our organization plays an exciting role as a park partner. We were instrumental in the development of the *Brown v. Board of Education* National Historic Site in Topeka, Kansas. We hope you enjoy the *Brown Quarterly* and we are always interested in comments from our readers.

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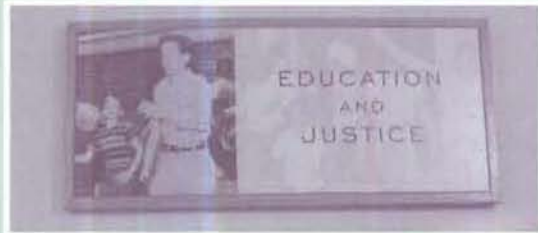
(Photo above): The Governor's Brown v. Board of Education Proclamation Ceremony held on the steps of the Kansas State Capitol on the morning of May 17, 2004.

**Visit the Brown v. Board
National Historic Site
15th & Monroe
Topeka, Kansas**

For visitor information,
see www.nps.gov/brvb
or call 785-354-1489.

Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site Exhibits

• Plaques guide visitors between galleries •

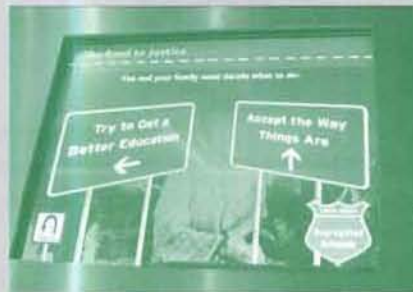


Race and the American Creed

Large screens in a 2400 foot environmental theater projects an array of live-action drama and synchronous historic images, tracing the struggle for equality since the early 1600s.

The Road to Justice

Interactive game-style program that asks visitors to examine the options that real plaintiffs faced before they resorted to the courts to outlaw racial segregation in schools.



The Five Cases

Profiles of the five school desegregation cases

that were considered together by the U.S. Supreme Court under the title of the Topeka case, *Brown v. Board of Education* are based on interviews with the participants in the cases.

They Gave Us Good Dreams

A video focuses on the historic importance of education in the African-American community and current efforts by African Americans to mentor young people and foster excellence.

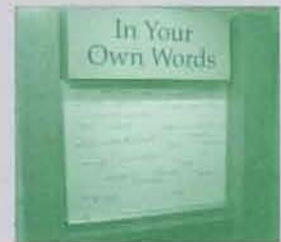
Hall of Courage

As visitors move through an immersive corridor with life size video screens as walls, they experience the taunting, threats and jeers faced by the first African Americans to attend formerly all-white schools.



Expression Station

Visitors may record responses to the Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site in their own words, in writing, drawings or voice recordings.



What Do You Think?

Film clips trigger an on-screen discussion by a group of young people. Viewers are polled at five stations and about such continuing issues as affirmative action and inadvertent expressions of prejudice.

Cultural Expressions

A listening station where visitors may play protest songs.



Pass It On

A poetic theater video urging young people to build on the strong legacy of past work to achieve civil and social equality for all.

Photos courtesy of Martin E. Wisneski

For on online tour of the Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site Galleries, go to
www.brownvboard.org/monroe/tour

The Kansas Road ...

Seeking Liberation in the Promised Land

The desire for better schooling motivated many African Americans to settle in Kansas during and after the Civil War. Unlike the South, white public opinion in Kansas favored schooling for African Americans.

The first stops for refugees were Union Army camps where some schooling was provided. Migration increased the African American population in Kansas from 627 in 1860 to over 17,000 by 1870.

Kansas Emancipation League Friends Of Impartial Freedom, an interracial organization established in Leavenworth in 1862, provided supplies to African Americans who came to Kansas during the Civil War. Teacher and civil rights activist, Charles Langston (1817-1892), an African American, served as Secretary of the League. The settlers of Nicodemus, an African-American frontier town, founded the first school in about 1880.



Initiated by Quakers, Dunlap Academy was a mission school established for the African-American settlement in Morris County in the 1870s.

Courtesy Kansas State Historical Society.

Seeking Equality of Opportunity

As the nation's leading advocates of racial equality, African Americans across the nation and in Kansas challenged the laws and practices of segregation in public schools. In Kansas protests emerged in the 1870s and 1880s.

As public schools spread across Kansas, the state's African American press fought against the expansion of segregation in urban schools.

Courtesy Kansas State Historical Society.



Before the public policy of racial segregation became entrenched, urban schools in Kansas were both

integrated and segregated.

Shown here is Lowman Hill Schools in Topeka in 1892.

Courtesy Mrs. Lois G. Lewis Collection, Kansas Collection, University of Kansas Libraries.



In rural areas African-American children attended the same one-room schools provided for all children of the community. Only first class cities were allowed to establish separate primary schools. Examples of integrated small town and rural schools were Hoxie, Burlingame, and Burnett School District in Douglas County (on right).

Courtesy Kansas Collection, University of Kansas Libraries.



For more on Kansas and the African-American Public School Experience, 1855-1955, go to brownvboard.org and click on "Exhibits"

Did You Know?

John Waller, an African-American lawyer and public official moved to Lawrence, Kansas in 1879. Waller was elected to the Lawrence School Board and successfully prevented school segregation in the city during his term on the board.

Alfred Fairfax, elected from Chautauqua County in 1889, was the first African American to serve in the Kansas legislature. In an attempt to repeal the segregation provisions of the 1879 Kansas school statute, he introduced a bill which provided all children equal access to Kansas public schools. It did not pass.

... to Brown v. Board

Achievement Despite Segregation

In Kansas, African-American schools frequently had faculty with more education and experience than the faculty in white schools and who required excellence from their students.

Sumner High School in Kansas City, Kansas, the first and only African American High School in the state was established by special legislation and was open from 1906-1978.

Sumner High School Faculty, 1917.



Courtesy Sumner Alumni Association Collection, Kansas Collection, University of Kansas Libraries.

Science Class Sumner High School, 1920.

Courtesy Sumner High School Alumni Association Collection, Kansas Collection, University of Kansas Libraries.



Topeka High School Dance 1940s. In Kansas high schools, social activities were segregated by color.

Courtesy Merrill Ross Collection, Kansas Collection, University of Kansas.

Kansas Court Cases on Segregation

Between 1890 and 1920, the illiteracy rate for African Americans in Kansas declined from 32.8 percent to 8.8 percent. African-American parents challenged the inequities of "separate but equal" in first class cities (population over 15,000) and tried to prevent extension of segregation in small towns. These appeals through the courts arose from a belief that enforced segregation prevented children from equal access to Kansas public schools.

11 Cases Reached the Kansas Supreme Court



- 1881 - *The Board of Education of Ottawa v. Elijah Tinnon*
- 1891 - *Knox v. Board of Education, Independence*
- 1903 - *Reynolds v. Board of Education, Topeka*
- 1906 - *Cartwright v. Board of Education, Coffeyville*
- 1907 - *Rowles v. Board of Education, Wichita*
- 1908 - *Williams v. Board of Education, Parsons*
- 1916 - *Woolridge v. Board of Education, Galena*
- 1924 - *Thurman-Watts v. Board of Education, Coffeyville*
- 1929 - *Wright v. Board of Education, Topeka*
- 1941 - *Graham v. Board of Education, Topeka*
- 1949 - *Webb v. School Distric 90, S. Park Johnson County*

Those Who Challenged

Central School, Ottawa, Kansas, 1885.

Courtesy Franklin County Historical Society and Kansas State Historical Society.



When the School Superintendent in Ottawa refused Leslie Tinnon admission to the school near his home, his father Elijah Tinnon brought suit. The Kansas Supreme Court ruled that second class cities could not discriminate. This decision was one of the earliest in the nation to favor racially integrated schools. Both Franklin County District Court and the Kansas Supreme Court found for Tinnon on the basis of the 14th Amendment which guarantees equal protection of the law.

D.A. Williams refused to send his four children to the new all black Douglas School located across seven railroad tracks from the family home in Parsons. In the 1908 *Williams v. Board of Education* case, the Kansas Supreme Court upheld the parents.

In Wichita, classrooms and playgrounds were segregated within Park School. African-American parents briefly succeeded in halting this practice in the courts. The 1907 Kansas Supreme Court case *Rowles v. Board of Education* involved Park School. By 1914 Wichita had two all black schools, Frederick Douglass and L'Ouverture.

Elisha Scott, attorney for Celia Thurman-Watts in the 1924 case from Coffeyville, successfully argued "such discrimination is without authority of law, un-American, unjust and contrary to the law governing cities of the first class."

The following resources available at the *Brown v. Board* National Historic Site Book Store or from the Western National Parks Association's online store at www.wnpsa.org.

Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site

A concise description with historical photos of the historic *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, including an account of the legal groundwork laid by the NAACP and countless courageous individuals.

Brown v. Board of Education 50th Anniversary Commemorative Poster

A full-color poster by Sam Smith, commissioned by the Brown Foundation; mug and mouse pad also available.

Warriors Don't Cry

by Melba Pattillo Beals

The story of Melba Pattillo, who in 1957, turned 16 and became a warrior on the front lines of a civil rights firestorm. Following the 1954 ruling in *Brown*, she was one of nine teenagers chosen to integrate Little Rock's Central High School.

Footsteps: Thurgood Marshall and Civil Rights, March/April 2003 – Vol. 5 No. 2

Did you know the landmark *Brown* case affects every public school in this country? Want to know more about Thurgood Marshall, a remarkable, forthright man who successfully argued this case? Learn about the cases he won and lost.

Eyes on the Prize

by Juan Williams

From the Montgomery bus boycott to the Little Rock Nine to the Selma-Montgomery march, thousands of ordinary people made up the civil rights movement. Whether leaders like Martin Luther King, Jr., or lesser-known participants like Barbara Rose Johns and Jim Zwerg, each person decided discrimination was wrong and did something about it.



Black Teachers on Teaching

by Michele Foster

A riveting portrait of the nation's history of inequality in education, describing the transition from segregated to integrated classrooms with an eye to what was gained and what was lost.

The Other Struggle for Equal Schools: Mexican Americans during the Civil Rights Era

by Ruben Donato

Examines the Mexican-American struggle for equal education during the 1960s and 1970s in the Southwest. Challenges conventional wisdom that Mexican Americans were passive victims and shows how Mexican-American parents confronted the system and how educators and school officials responded.

The Thirteenth Amendment: Ending Slavery

by Elizabeth Schleichert

Explores the history of slavery in the United States and some of the people who fought to abolish it. Examines the impact of the 13th Amendment and the continuing struggle by African Americans to achieve equal standing in society.

The Jim Crow Laws and Racism in American History

by David K. Fremon

Traces the history of discrimination from the end of the Civil War through the Jim Crow era. Highlights efforts to promote equality and shows how segregation made the South a caste system, with separate water fountains, waiting rooms, hospitals and cemeteries for whites and blacks.

Simple Justice (VHS video)

Based closely on Richard Kluger's book of the same name, this video recounts the remarkable legal strategy and social struggle that resulted in the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*.



Teacher Talk

Consider a Play Reading of "Now Let Me Fly" During African American History Month

Youth versions of *Now Let Me Fly* may be downloaded at <http://anationacts.brownvboard.org/>



"Characters from the time of *Brown v. Board* came alive on stage before a full house ... the audience got a glimpse into how *Brown v. Board* came to be, through the lives of those who made it happen."

WIBW Channel 13 News



(Photo above): Actors Rehearsing

Photo credit: Martin Wisneski

"...powerful and compelling."

Barbara Bolling

President, Indiana NAACP



You can still join others across the country for readings of *Now Let Me Fly* by award-winning playwright Marcia Cebulski. This uplifting play tells of brave citizens who held grassroots meetings across the nation in homes, schools, church basements and barbershops. Based on hundreds of oral histories and personal interviews, *Now Let Me Fly* brings to life the real stories and struggles leading up to *Brown*. It opens hearts and minds to the issues of race, education and equality.

Synopsis

It is 1950 and Thurgood Marshall wants to end the doctrine of "Separate But Equal." When the ghost of his mentor, Charles Houston, visits him, his enthusiasm turns to doubt. Houston takes Marshall on a journey, looking in on the lives and losses of the men and women working in the grassroots struggle against segregation. Together they visit Washington, D.C.; Farmville, Virginia; Hockessin, Delaware; Somerton, South Carolina and Topeka, Kansas. They collect the thumbprints of the ordinary people who became activists in all five of the cases that went to the Supreme Court.

Now Let Me Fly was commissioned by the Brown Foundation and Washburn University. **Professional productions** are those in which any actor is paid or admission is charged; they are subject to royalties and must receive playwright's permission at

<http://anationacts.brownvboard.org>



Marcia Cebulski, playwright

"The play was powerful and brought history to life...What an awesome experience..."

Sharon Brown
Moravian College
Bethlehem, PA



**A NATION
ACTS: Play
Readings of
*Now Let Me Fly***

Teachers may still download youth versions of *Now Let Me Fly* for use in their classrooms.

Brown v. Board National Historic Site Grand Opening - May 17, 2004

Commemoration Program

S

Stephen E. Adams, Park Superintendent

P

Fran Mainella, Director, National Park Service

E

Professor Ronald C. Griffin, Washburn University School of Law

A

Mr. Will Rogers, President, Trust for Public Land

K

Mr. Robert Stanton, Board Member, African American Experience Fund

E

Dennis Hayes, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

R

The Honorable James A. McClinton, Mayor of Topeka, Kansas

S

The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings, United States House of Representatives**The Honorable Jim Ryun, United States House of Representatives****The Honorable Sam Brownback, United States Senate****The Honorable Rod Paige, Secretary of Education****Judge Craig Manson, Assistant Secretary of the Interior****The Honorable Gale Norton, Secretary of the Interior****Justice Stephen G. Breyer, Supreme Court of the United States****The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius, Governor of Kansas****The Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth, Civil Rights Movement Forefather****Cheryl Brown Henderson, President,****Brown Foundation for Educational Equity, Excellence and Research****The President of the United States, George W. Bush**

Photo: More than 5,000 people gather on a clear, sunny day in Topeka, Kansas.

For information on African, Asian, Hispanic, and Native American
history, see past issues of the Brown Quarterly at:

brownvboard.org

E-Mail: brownfound@juno.com

Web: <http://brownvboard.org>