

CRM STAR LECTURE BRIEFING NOTES

NORTHERN STATES (THE UNION)

The Union was constituted of 20 states and 5 border slave states that fought in opposition to the secession of the southern slave states in 1861.

SOUTHERN STATES (THE CONFEDERACY)

AKA the *Slave States of US until 1860. These States were all Slave States at some point between 1776 and 1860.

*Alabama	*Kentucky	*North Carolina	*Virginia
*Arkansas	*Louisiana	*South Carolina	
*Florida	*Mississippi	*Tennessee	
*Georgia	*Missouri	*Texas	

They formed part of a Confederacy that created its own government after seceding from the existing United States of America. The Confederate Constitution legalised ownership of slaves, in response to the Northern State and Federal Government's plans to make slave ownership illegal – it also wanted to see other States given the right to legally protect the right to slave ownership if they wanted. The Southern States economy was extremely reliant on the ownership of slaves to work its large plantations. These economic demands were morally supported by strong beliefs that Black people were inferior and, therefore, only really fit for slavery.

The Confederate Government existed between 1861 and 1865, and fought against Abraham Lincoln's Unionist Army during the US Civil War over that time period. They eventually lost this war.

FIRST RECONSTRUCTION

The First Reconstruction represents the twelve years after the Civil War. During this period the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments abolishing slavery, creating citizenship for Blacks, and providing the right to vote to all, respectively, were passed. The reconstruction was an attempt to bring the States of the former Confederacy into the Union.

LYNCHING IN THE UNITED STATES

Lynching was a brutal mob based form of punishment popular with White Racists in the US. It would be used to punish Black people for a range of transgressions linked to identifying Blacks as having a subordinate, sub-human existence in the US. The threat of lynching proved extremely effective at keeping Black people afraid to challenge racism, and engage in accessing education, voting or attempting to fraternise with Whites. The Ku Klux Klan (KKK) was heavily involved in lynching, and the police were known to hand over accused Black people for lynching. At the very least, 2500 African-Americans were lynched in the US between 1865 and 1965.

SHARECROPPING

Sharecropping became popular after the collapse of the plantation system and disestablishment of slavery. In sharecropping, landowners would allow poor farmers to harvest their land for them in return for a share of the crop harvested. In Southern States, over 80% of Black farmers would be sharecroppers. This system became redundant after the industrialisation of farming over the 1930s and 1940s.

REDLINING

The practice of designating certain geographical areas as non-investable. Banks, retail, education and health services would refuse to develop or invest in these areas thereby stopping residents from gaining access to things such as quality healthcare, mortgages or possession based insurance. Although never explicitly stated, the practice was an ideal way to suppress non-White communities and maintain geographical and social segregation. By refusing to lend to employed, financially comfortable African Americans and/or other non-White ethnic groups because they lived in these redlined areas, Corporation and Federal America was able to control the movement of these communities into new geographical and economic territory considered to be the rightful and exclusive domains of its White citizens.

1950 - LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE ON CIVIL RIGHTS (LCCR)

The LCCR was created The Leadership Conference was founded in 1950 by A. Philip Randolph, Roy Wilkins, and Arnold Aronson. It is a coalition of a number of Civil Rights Groups.

1955-1956 - MONTGOMERY BUS BOYCOTT

This bus boycott began after Rosa Parks refused to accord with the rules for Black passengers using the public transport system. She had been asked to move from her seat to accommodate a White man. This was a common request on the public transport system where Blacks were forced to sit at the back of the bus, give up their seats to White passengers and were barred from sitting next to, or on the same row, as White Passengers. Rosa was arrested, and the local Black activist networks, supported by Dr. Martin Luther King jnr., and Ralph Abernathy led the region's Blacks in 381 day boycott of the local public bus system.

The African American boycotters did not return to using the public transport system until after the Browder V Gayle ruling by the Supreme Court – which found the segregation of public transport to be unconstitutional. The boycott was very effective – the bus service was often the only way that Black people could travel to and from work and school. Some 50,000 Blacks were now no longer paying bus fares and this hit the economy hard. Although the act of defiance shown by Rosa may appear to have sparked off an unplanned protest, it is important to note that this was a highly organised and, to a certain extent, planned event – there had been talk of bus boycotts before, with Rosa's arrest proving an ideal catalyst to kick-start the process. The Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) was formulated within days of the arrest to organise the protest. Both Fairclough (2001) and Paterson et al (2001) note that the protest proved popular with the media and gained world wide coverage due to the obstinate refusal of the areas White leaders to consider any form of concession.

This was NOT the first bus boycott. Rosa Parks is a fascinating character, often presented as an everyday Black person turned into a Civil Right hero overnight, but this somewhat undermines the work Rosa had been undertaking for the movement for a number of years. It is important to note that a number of Black people had taken the similar stance of refusing to move to the 'Black' areas of the bus. Claudette Colvin had also undertaken the same thing, and it quite possible that given her lower social standing than Parks, people weren't as willing to publicly support her as they were Parks.

1960s SIT-IN MOVEMENT

One of the most famous sit-ins took place on February 1st 1960. It was undertaken in a branch of Woolworths by 4 Black students in Greensboro, North Carolina after the staff in the café there refused to serve them. They refused to leave.

The Greensboro sit-in students, McNeill, Blair, McCain and Richmond, weren't know the positive trend in direct action by young Black Americans they would set off. Their decisions to calmly and honestly challenge a somewhat bemused Woolworth's staff became a template for student and young people's activism, and the SNCC grew out of the network and coordination from subsequent committees. The four, who were students at North Carolina A & T University, were denied coffee when they sat in a local, segregated café in the Woolworths. They were denied because that café was only for White customers. They refused to leave until they were served. When the café closed, some 30mins early, they simply left and returned home to their college campus. News of their protest had already spread, and other students wanted to join the protest. The next day, they returned as a group of 24 students and, a couple of days later, were joined by White students from other local colleges, as more and more sit-ins took place across the whole town. The movement spread to other Southern cities – with 54 known sit-ins in action in 15 cities across 9 states. Despite the peaceful attitude of the students involved, all of the participants would have been verbally abused, and in many cases physically abused. People poured hot and cold drinks over them, hurled food at them and kicked and punched.

Ezell Blair Jr. - Ezell was born in Greensboro and chose to study locally at N.C. A&T. After graduating he moved to Massachusetts. He also changed his name to Jibreel Khazan. He left because he found it hard to get work because of his sit-in role. He settled in New Bedford, MA with his wife and had three children. After his move, Ezell went on to study law at the predominantly Black Howard University. Blair has worked with an Islamic Centre and with people with learning difficulties. He continues to talk about his experiences before and after the CRM. He has also worked as a professional storyteller.

"I didn't do this for profit. I did it for love of God and country and for those who weren't yet born." 2007

Franklin Eugene McCain - Franklin was born in North Carolina but raised in Washington. He returned to N. Carolina to study. He was a room mate of fellow protestor, David Richmond; and he studied for a Bachelors degree in Sciences. McCain stayed involved in the CRM after graduating from NC A&T, and settled in the state with his wife to raise a family and work as a scientist. In addition, he also went on to study at North

Carolina State University and Princeton University. Throughout his life he continued work with, and eventually hold management positions in, the NACCP. He also worked with the NAACP and with local government. He is now a member of the board of Trustees for (N.C. A&T.).

'There was a little old White lady who was finishing up her coffee at the counter. She strode toward me and I said to myself, "Oh my, someone to spit in my face or slap my face." I was prepared for it. But she stands behind Joseph McNeil and me and puts her hands on our shoulders. She said, "Boys, I'm so proud of you. I only regret that you didn't do this 10 years ago." That was the biggest boost, morally, that I got that whole day, and probably the biggest boost for me during the entire movement.' Date of quote unknown.

Joseph Alfred McNeil - Joseph was born in Wilmington, NC, and studied in engineering and physics at N.C. A&T. McNeil became an army reservist after graduating and was engaged in active duty until 1969 flying on missions around East Asia, amongst other places. After active duty, McNeil also worked in administration and finance in the private sector. He rose to the rank of Major General for the reservists before retiring. McNeil still delivers talks on his experience and life in the CRM and the Armed Forces now.

"We had no idea at the time that our small act of defiance in taking a non-violent stand would turn into a movement that would spread to thousands of people throughout the South," 2009.

David Leinail Richmond:

David was born in Greensboro and studied Business Administration at N.C. A&T, but never completed his degree. Richmond had many different jobs after leaving N.C. A&T – inc factories, health care and the public sector. Several years later he moved away from Greensboro for the first time, to the town of Franklin for almost a decade, but he moved back to Greensboro to care for his parents. Sadly, David passed away in 1990 – aged just 49. Subsequently N.C. A&T awarded him with a posthumous honorary doctorate degree. In his absence, his two sons have engaged in a number of public appearances and reminiscence activities with the other members of the Greensboro to make sure his legacy is never forgotten.

This was NOT the first sit-in. There were a documented 16 previous sit-ins to this one, but this was one of the most successful, with new students joining the protest everyday until it ended on February 6th. It was also given some sympathetic responses by White politicians from North Carolina.

The act of sit-ins would prove a popular non-violent method of activism and were commenced in cities and towns across the American South, all the way to Florida. They also prompted the creation of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). The protests were full of young educated Blacks, whose existence proved a wonderful, overt contradiction to the lazy, thick Negro stereotype that American racism had relied upon. In 'Civil Rights and the USA' Paterson et al, document how, by April the same year 'over 100 cities were affected and nearly 50, 000 people were actively involved in demonstrations'. (Paterson et al, 2001, p.129).

MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM SUMMER

The Freedom Summer Campaign of 1963 was coordinated by three Civil Rights groups: CORE, SNCC, and the NAACP. Volunteers from different racial and economic backgrounds from the South and North sought to help African-American utilise their right to vote in Mississippi. A number of sub projects were generated, such as Freedom Schools teaching African American History, whilst groups like the Medical Committee for Human Rights and ACLU provided African Americans with access to medical and legal help. Those involved were victims of great violence – with the most memorable instance being the murder of African American, James Cheney, and his White colleagues Michael Schwerner and Andrew Goodman.

1963 MARCH ON WASHINGTON

This march took place on August 28th, 1963. It was comprised of between 200,000 and 250,000 people. At that time it was the largest mass demonstration ever seen in the US, and it was organised by a coalition of Civil Rights groups. It is best known as the time when Dr. Martin Luther King Jnr delivering his rousing and emotional 'I have a dream' speech.

16TH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH IN BIRMINGHAM

This church was bombed by four White racists and Ku Klux Klan members on the morning of September 15th, 1963. It was a noted site for meetings between Civil Rights advocates and a centre for coordinating activities. Four African American children were killed in the bombing - Addie Mae Collins, Cynthia Wesley, Carole Robertson and Denise McNair – and their murders attracted a lot of press attention. An eyewitness identified Robert Chambliss as responsible for the murders and he was charged, only to be acquitted at trial due to poor evidence. A later retrial of Chambliss in 1977 used evidence that appeared to be deliberately excluded from his original trial. He was found guilty and imprisoned aged 73. Two other men identified by the FBI as involved have been convicted. Bobby Cherry was convicted and imprisoned aged 71 in May 2002. Thomas Blanton was convicted and imprisoned in 2001 aged 63. The other man wanted for involvement in the murders, Herman Cash, died before the FBI chose to charge Cherry and Blanton.

THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONS

STUDENT NON-VIOLENT COORDINATING COMMITTEE (SNCC)

Created after the development of the sit-in movement, the SNCC was full of Black and White student activists who campaigned on behalf of equal voting rights and was a driving force in the Mississippi freedom summer movements. In later years, under the stewardship of Stokely Carmichael, the SNCC would get rid of its White members and become more concerned with the burgeoning Black power movement.

SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE (SCLC)

Created by Martin Luther King Jnr and Ralph Abernathy after the Montgomery bus boycott. The organisation was run by a number of Black southern ministers and had a strong commitment to non-violent activism. It was heavily involved in voting rights protests in Selma, Alabama in 1965, and open-housing demonstrations in Chicago in 1968.

EMMETT TILL

Emmett Till was a 14 year old African American boy from Chicago who was murdered when visiting family in Mississippi. Till wasn't used to Southern social rules of racial segregation, and was accused of flirting with a White woman after talking to her in a shop. Her husband, and her brother sought out Till at a family residence, kidnapped him, beat him, gauged out one of his eyes, before shooting him and dumping his body in the Tallahatchie River. His body was recovered 3 days later. Till's mother took his body back to Chicago and insisted upon having an open casket and a public funeral service so that the world could see what had happened to her son.

EDGAR D. NIXON

Edgar Daniel Nixon had been as prominent in the Montgomery area as King and was a prominent Union man for years before the CRM hit its peak.

He had acted as a negotiator on behalf of local community members who had problems with local state officers and public authority figures. He also led voting drives for the local community, hosting marches to the steps of the local courts to highlight the problems faced by Black voters. Nixon has been particularly busy working with the Montgomery branch of the African American Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. Like many poor Blacks, Edgar received little formal education, but this didn't stop him from working his way up through the railroad employment system from a baggage handler to a train porter. He eventually joined the Union in 1928, helping form the Montgomery Branch. He was also the head of the Montgomery NAACP for a short time.

Nixon was a key figure in the Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955. He and another colleague formed the NAACP and saw the arrest as Rosa Parks as the perfect opportunity to spark an effective and long bus boycott. Rosa was deemed a good candidate as it would be hard for other people to smear her name – especially the local press - given she had no criminal record and was known to be an upstanding member of the community. Rosa Parks was not the first Black person, or Black woman for that matter, to refuse to vacate her seat as a protest – but for many reasons, such as the 'perceived character and morality of previous protestors, they never led to such large scale social action.

But that is not all that Nixon did. After paying part of Rosa's bail - the other part paid by White lawyer, Clifford Durr, he mobilised Black community members to take part in the boycott - a boycott with massive financial consequences for the city's White residents and business owners. This all happened with the help of the invigorating and inspiring words of Martin Luther King, Jnr, who made his name via the boycott; but it was Nixon that invited King to get involved in the boycott plans.

Nixon and King eventually found working together difficult – with issues around leadership and decision-making causing visible tensions within the Montgomery chapter of the NAACP. Edgar resigned from the group in 1957. This did not stop Nixon dedicating the remainder of his life to the cause of Civil Rights. He was part of the porter's union until 1964 when he stopped working aged 65, and got involved in a number of projects concerning health care and education for Black children. Although, it has been contended that he was a prime example of how working class members of the leading groups in the CRM were often sidelined to make way for more 'eloquent' and 'palatable' middle-class Black member to become leaders.

He died in 1987, with his home now listed as site of heritage by the State of Alabama.

ELLA BAKER

Southern students and SNCC activist, Baker was a well-respected Black female activist who worked with a number of groups, favouring an approach of non-violence but without leaders and fame.

Ella began her life in activism whilst still a student at Shaw University, North Carolina, and after graduation she moved to New York City and began to work with a number of young peoples and women's groups furthering the agenda of getting all people of colour fair and equal access to employment. She began her work with the NAACP in 1940, holding a number of roles, always seeking new ways to work with, and even set-up new groups and acquired new ways for people to take non-violent action.

Ella was particularly impressed with the Greensboro sit-in protests, and was instrumental in setting up communication with a variety of Black student groups across the southern States to help spark new sit-ins in new towns and cities. She wanted young people to know that they could make a difference and could be empowered. It was Ella that eventually brought representatives of the sit-in movements together at one meeting, from which the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) came into being. Through her role in SNCC, Ella also worked to develop the Freedom Rides (1961) and Freedom Summer (1964).

In the process of forming SNCC, Baker chose to leave the SCLC, led by Martin Luther King Jr; and part of her reason for leaving was very much linked to her dislike of the SCLC having a leader at all. Although she recognised the need for key people to drive activities forward, she felt one person's leadership should not drive an organisation's entire agenda and action. Ella acted much more as a mentor helping young members formulate ideas and plans.

By 1964, Ella was back in the north, and stayed based in New York City for the rest of her life. She remained involved in the CRM, extending her work consider to Pan African issues, and those of the Latino community; staying focused on her belief that true empowerment could only really begin with truly equal voting rights. She has a Human Rights Centre named after her.

DR MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR

Martin Luther King was a pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama who went on to become a leading public figure in the Civil Rights Movement. King was involved in a number of organisations including the NAACP and the SCLC. He played a pivotal role in the development and enactment of the Montgomery Bus Boycott. He is often remembered most for delivering the rousing 'I have a dream' speech to over 200,000 demonstrators at the march on Washington in 1963. King was arrested a number of times by authorities trying to undermine him. He was an advocate of non-violent protest and also worked towards improving the experience for America's poor communities across racial boundaries. He won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964. King was assassinated on April 4th in 1968 in Memphis. His murderer, James Earl Ray, was arrested on the run in Britain in 1968 and was convicted in 1969. He is still in prison today. King's death generated much sorrow across the world; and riots ensued in some cities in the US. In 1986, January 20th became Martin Luther King Day in the US.

JAMES CHENEY, MICHAEL SCHWERNER, ANDREW GOODMAN

African American, James Cheney, and his White colleagues Michael Schwerner and Andrew Goodman were murdered in Mississippi in the summer of 1963 whilst campaigning for voting rights. The three men had gone to investigate an alleged church bombing and were arrested by police at the site. The men were subsequently registered as missing, but it soon transpired that they had been handed over to the Ku Klux Klan by the police who had arrested them. Although 18 men were arrested in connection with their murder in 1964 – any charges brought did not include murder. There were a number of mistrials including one for Edgar Ray Killen – long thought to have been the main protagonist in the murders. Numerous flawed or half-hearted attempts to acquire justice occurred until, finally, in 1995, a Klansman convicted of ordering the murder of Schwerner admitted that Killen was guilty. Killen was tried again in 2005 and sent to prison for all three murder. The court declined to request the arrest of any living members of the original 18 men arrested.

JAMES MEREDITH

James Meredith was the first African American to be admitted to the University of Mississippi. Meredith was at first barred from attending the campus but finally stepped on to campus in October 1962. Riots broke out across campus between segregationists and anti-segregationists. The riots got so out of control that Robert and John F. Kennedy both got involved, sending Marshals and troops to manage the situation. Two people died during the clashes.

OLIVER BROWN

Oliver Brown was the named plaintiff in the class action suit, *Brown v. Board of Education* class action suit taken to the Supreme Court in 1952, with a successful ruling coming in 1954.

This ruling gave a platform from which some non-violent action could begin as Black children and their parents acted on the ruling. Sadly the local White communities were often violent with children and young adults being spat on, beaten, and verbally abused as they tried to attend educational institutions they had every right to.

Oliver was the father of Linda Brown. He, alongside around a dozen other parents had sought get their children enrolled into local schools that were considered White schools in the Kansas town, Topeka, in 1951. They were denied places purely on the basis that they were African American. This was despite the fact the White school was much closer to where the Brown family lived. Geographical location was not the only issue that concerned the parents of the children denied places. They were well aware that it was common for Education Boards to spend 3X more on the education of a White child than they would on a Black child. This expenditure was reflected in everything – from the quality of teachers, the quality and condition of the teaching materials, all the way through to the quality of school meals and the school building.

Oliver and the other parents chose to sue the Topeka Education Board, with Oliver's surname appearing first on the lawsuit. There is some controversy over why the Brown family name was chosen as the main name for the lawsuit. Some argue it is simply

because he was listed first, but that argument is undermined by the fact that another, parent, whose first name was Darlene, also had the surname Brown., Others argue that Oliver Brown was chosen because he was only male parent involved in this suit, and was considered a reputable and solid citizen, given he was a local church pastor. It is also important to remember that NAACP played a major role in bringing this case through the judicial process, with many claiming that the NAACP explicitly invited Oliver Brown to join the case after the NAACP initiated it.

The Topeka-based case went through numerous local law proceedings with the status quo being upheld, until it was taken to the Supreme Court in 1952. The case was combined with several other similar lawsuits from several other Southern states at the behest of the Supreme Court – the final case presented to the Supreme Court represented almost 200 plaintiffs. The ruling in favour of Linda Brown and the other children did not occur until May 17th 1951. They were supported in the process all the way by the NAACP.

FEDERAL HOUSING ADMINISTRATION

Created in 1934 to regulate the rate of interest and the terms of mortgages that it insured, increasing the number of people who could afford a down payment on a house and a mortgage. This allowed more family house purchases, and more economically challenged members of the American population to attain the status of home owners in its burgeoning suburbs.

REVEREND JAMES REEB

James Reeb was a White pastor and civil rights activist in Washington DC who was beaten to death by segregationists whilst attending an anti-segregation march in Selma, Alabama. Reeb was one of a number of White activists who were beaten and/or killed during the CRM.

ROSA PARKS

Rosa Parks was an African American woman from Montgomery, Alabama, who made the headlines in 1955 when she was arrested after refusing to give up her seat and move to the coloured seats of the bus so a White man could sit down. Although Rosa wasn't the first person - or woman - to be arrested for such acts, her conviction attracted a lot of attention when brought as a test case by the NAACP. Her experience also served as the catalyst for the Montgomery Bus Boycott after which Rosa Parks' name became synonymous with the Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s. It's important to note that Parks was an active participant in the movement years before her arrest in 1955. She and her husband were members of the NAACP and she contributed to the development of the movement in Montgomery in the preceding decades.

MEDGAR EVERS

Medgar Evers was a former WW2 service man who subsequently became a Civil Rights Activist. Evers was a key member of the NAACP and part of the boycott campaign against White merchants that played a part in the University of Mississippi allowing James Meredith to be accepted on to its courses. He also played a notable role in the campaign to get publicity and justice for the family of murdered Emmett Till. Medgar was killed in 1963 after being shot outside his home. The man charged with his murder, Klansman

Byron De La Beckwith was eventually convicted of the crime in 1994 - after 2 failed trials. The two trials held in 1964 resulted in deadlocked juries – they were comprised solely of White men.

THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN LAW

The Civil Rights movement (CRM) was in many ways much more successful in its legal challenges to racism than it was in changing social attitudes.

From the beginning of the US Civil War till the 1980s, the US Federal Government enacted a number of changes to bring about legal equality for Black People, with some bills allowing the first opportunity for equal rights for other equality-challenged groups, such as women.

The US, due to the circumstances of its creation, has always had a complex political system that has allowed for States to have their own individual laws, and find ways to challenge and circumvent the mainly positive changes that the US govt tried to introduce.

In many situations, especially during the later periods of the CRM, the battles of the CRM were aimed at removing State-created barriers to abiding by Federal Law, with many cases going to State and Federal Supreme Court for decisions.

Below are a number of key State, Federal and Court based events that formed the CRM from 1850 onwards.

1857 - DRED SCOTT V. SANDFORD

The Dred Scott ruling of 1857 by the Supreme Court found African Americans brought into the US as slaves or freemen could never hold citizenship. The case emanated from slave Dred Scott's attempts to buy his freedom. After his attempts failed he took this case all the way to the Supreme Court. Scott argued that, given his owner had moved him with her to the free state of Illinois he was now a free man and should be released from his servitude. The final decision was driven by a belief that Scott, as a Black man, was not a citizen and was not even entitled to sue his owner to gain freedom in the first place.

13TH AMENDMENT

Adopted in 1864. Abolished slavery and involuntary servitude in all States.

14TH AMENDMENT

Adopted in 1868. Allows Blacks to be determined to be United States Citizens. Overturned previous ruling in Dred Scott v. Sandford of 1857.

1870 - 15TH AMENDMENT

Adopted in 1870. Bans all levels of government in the United States from denying a citizen the right to vote based on that citizen's "race, colour, or previous condition of servitude".

1876 - JIM CROW LAWS AKA DE JURE SEGREGATION

The practice of legal racial segregation. De jure segregation in the United States was instituted in individual States and regions by the introduction of the Jim Crow Laws in 1876 and remained in place until the signing of the Civil Rights Act in 1964. The laws claimed to uphold the concept of equality for Black and Whites in the United States – aka.

The doctrine of 'Separate But Equal', but allowed for services, facilities and public accommodations to keep Black and White patrons separate. The ruling in the Plessy v. Ferguson of 1896 was one of a number of legal challenges to the De jure segregation that failed. This segregation provided Whites in Southern States the ability to maintain their sense of racial superiority in the face of Federal law which supposed to suggest otherwise.

The Jim Crow laws allowed individual States and regions to bypass the 13th, 14th and 15th amendments and legally maintain racial segregation. They were introduced in 1876 and were only ended in 1964/65 following the introduction of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. See all Jim Crow Laws.

1896 - PLESSY V. FERGUSON

This case represents one of many failed challenges to segregation in the South. Homer Plessy, a man of mixed White and African-American heritage was arrested in 1896 for sitting in a White carriage on a train in the state of Louisiana. Plessy challenged this arrest on the basis that it violated his rights under the 13th and 14th amendments, and his challenge went all the way to the Supreme Court. At this point the case became known as Plessy Vs Ferguson – Ferguson being the name of the Judge who ruled against Plessy in Louisiana. Plessy lost his case and this decision set in place the precedent that "separate" facilities for Blacks and Whites were constitutional as long as they were "equal". This acceptance of de jure segregation in the realm of public services wasn't overruled until the Brown Vs Board of Education Ruling in 1954, which found that such segregation was inherently unequal.

1933 - NEW DEAL

The New Deal was a collection of programmes developed by the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration to stimulate the US economy after the Great Depression of the 1930s. The programmes – introduced between 1933 and 1936 – were focused on three issues, also known as the 3 R's: RELIEF for the struggling poor; RECOVERY for the stunted economy; and REFORM to stop such an economic depression happening again.

1954 - BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION

A landmark Supreme Court decision in 1954 that declared segregated education as unconstitutional. This victory was a launch pad for other challenges to de jure segregation in other field of public life – including transportation. Like many challenges to segregation, Brown was a case presented by a collection of individuals in a class action lawsuit – one of whom was Oliver Brown, who was unhappy that his child had travel a number of blocks to attend a Black school when a White school was much nearer. By the time the case reached the Supreme Court it actually encompassed a number of cases brought by parents against School Boards. The funds for the legal challenges were provided by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

1960 - BOYNTON V. VIRGINIA

This ruling declared segregation in interstate bus and rail stations unconstitutional and was created by a case brought about by an African American student, Bruce Boynton, who had been arrested and fined in 1958 for trespass after trying to order food whilst sitting in the White section in a café at a bus station in Virginia whilst his coach - which was

travelling from Washington DC to Montgomery - Alabama, was at a rest stop. The case for Boynton was pleaded before the Supreme Court in 1960 by Thurgood Marshall, who later became the first Black Supreme Court Justice.

1964 - CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964

This wide-reaching prohibited racial and gender discrimination in public services and areas. It was originally created by President Kennedy, but was signed into existence by President Johnson after Kennedy's assassination. This provided a stronger and more decisive power to force the desegregation of schools, parks, libraries and any workplace etc; and those who refused to do so became subject to Federal punishments.

1965 – VOTING RIGHT OF 1965

This Act was created after it became clear that the Civil Rights Act of 1964 wasn't having the required impact on the ability of Blacks to vote in the US – particularly in the Southern States. The Act prohibited states from imposing any "voting qualification or prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice, or procedure ... to deny or abridge the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race or color." It outlawed practices that some States had adopted as a means to find ways of stopping Blacks from voting - such practices included setting literacy tests.