Thurgood Marshall Note Catcher  Directions: Use the organizer below to keep track of details connected to the inquiry question.		
Early Life		
College Life		
Work for the NAACP		
Specific Supreme Court Cases		
Specific Quotations		

**Directions:** Cut out the cases and case summaries below and match them. Then match the cases with the images. There may be more than one case that matches an image. Summarize the key ideas in the graphic organizer.

Chambers v. Florida (1940)	Sweatt v. Painter (1950)	Bolling v. Sharpe (1954)
Smith v. Allwright (1944)	McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents (1950)	Cooper v. Aaron (1958)
Morgan v. Virginia (1946)	Brown v. Board of Education (1954)	NAACP v. Alabama (1958)

Texas allowed the Democratic Party to set up the rules for primary elections. The Party did not allow African Americans to vote in the primary elections. The Supreme Court held that the rule restricting primaries to White voters denied Lonnie Smith, an African American, equal protection under the law in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment. Thurgood Marshall said this was one of the most important cases that he won in front of the Supreme Court.

Heamann Sweatt was denied entry into the University of Texas Law School because he was Black. The state promised to open a separate law school for African Americans. The Supreme Court held that the Equal Protection Clause required the University of Texas to admit Sweatt. The Court found that the "law school for Negroes," would have been very unequal to the University of Texas Law School. The Supreme Court argued that the separate school would be inferior in a number of areas, including faculty, course variety, library facilities, legal writing opportunities, and overall prestige. Thurgood Marshall believed that attacking graduate schools was a start to desegregating all public schools.

The University of Oklahoma denied George W. McLaurin admission to its graduate program in education. McLaurin sued, arguing his constitutional right to equal protection under the 14th Amendment was violated. The federal court held that McLaurin must be allowed to attend the University of Oklahoma. They allowed him to attend, but the University of Oklahoma segregated him on campus. He had to sit by himself in the classroom, at the library, and at a different table in the cafeteria. McLaurin sued again. The Supreme Court held that the different treatment given to McLaurin was also a violation of the 14th Amendment's equal protection clause. In this case, Marshall helped to make clear that all races must be treated equally on a college campus.

Spottswood Bolling was the parent of an African American student in Washington, D.C. He and other parents sued Washington, D.C. Board of Education to stop school segregation. Cases like *Brown v. Board of Education* attacked segregation through the 14th Amendment. Unfortunately, the 14th Amendment only applied to states. Washington, D.C., is not a state. In this case, the Supreme Court held that racial discrimination in the public schools of Washington, D.C. was unconstitutional under the 5th Amendment's "liberty" protection. The Supreme Court decided this case on the same day as *Brown v. Board of Education*. Thurgood Marshall intentionally brought this case at the same time as *Brown v. Board of Education* to attack segregation in all K-12 public schools, including the nation's capital.

After the decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, the governor of Oklahoma resisted integrating the schools in Little Rock, Arkansas. Marshall brought this to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court held that government officials must integrate the schools under the Brown decision. The governor could not use maintaining law and order as a reason to avoid integrating schools. The decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* was the supreme law of the land and applied to all public schools in all the states. This is one of many cases where Thurgood Marshall had to return to court after an initial decision. In this case, his follow-through pressured government officials to honor the Constitution.

Alabama wanted to stop the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) from organizing and working in the state. The state issued a subpoena for a list of all of the NAACP's members. The NAACP said that Alabama's request to turn over the list of its members violated the right of people to associate freely with others under the 1st and 14th Amendments. The Supreme Court agreed. They held that freedom to belong to an organization with shared beliefs and ideas is a constitutional right. Giving up the names of the NAACP's membership could discourage participation out of fear. The NAACP in each state helped to raise funds and defend important cases. Thurgood Marshall knew that protecting the right to associate was important to continuing the fight for civil rights.

Public schools in the state of Kansas, like many other states, segregated students by race. Linda Brown's parents, alongside other parents, sued the Topeka Board of Education to end school segregation. The Supreme Court held that "separate but equal" school facilities are inherently unequal and violate the protections of the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment. The Court reasoned that the segregation of public education based on race created a sense of inferiority that had a harmful effect on the education and personal growth of African American children. This is an important case that Thurgood Marshall helped to win. This case helped to end segregation across the United States.

Virginia had a law segregating riders by race on interstate buses. Irene Morgan, an African American woman, was arrested for refusing to give up her seat to a White passenger on a Greyhound bus traveling from Virginia to Maryland. In this case, the Supreme Court held that Virginia's state law requiring racial segregation on interstate buses was unconstitutional. This decision was based on the Commerce Clause. Segregating buses that crossed state lines created an undue burden on interstate commerce. This was one of the first cases where Thurgood Marshall argued that the commerce clause could be used to attack segregation. Later, Congress would use the commerce clause to justify the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

In 1933, a white fish market owner in Pompano, Florida, was robbed and murdered. Local law enforcement officers got four Black migrant workers to confess after a week of torture and abuse. The men were held for days without lawyers and questioned for long periods of time by up to 10 police officers at a time. In 1940, the United States Supreme Court held that confessions obtained through mental or physical coercion in criminal trials were unconstitutional. Mr. Marshall helped prepare the defense for this case. It was one of the first cases Marshall won in front of the Supreme Court, which helped him build strategies for future cases.

**Directions:** Cut out the case summaries and match them with the cases listed below. Glue them or write a brief summary in the box.

Case Name	Case Description
Chambers v. Florida (1940)	
Smith v. Allwright (1944)	
Morgan v. Virginia (1946)	
Sweatt v. Painter (1950)	
McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents (1950)	

Case Name	Case Description
Brown v. Board of Education (1954)	
Bolling v. Sharpe (1954)	
Cooper v. Aaron (1958)	
NAACP v. Alabama (1958)	

**Directions:** Read the following quotations. Pick **two quotations** that you believe partially illustrate why Thurgood Marshall was called Mr. Civil Rights and explain in the provided boxes.

### **Quotations from THURGOOD MARSHALL**

Founder of NAACP's Legal Defense Fund, Former Attorney for NAACP, Former Solicitor General, and Former Supreme Court Justice

"What is striking to me is the importance of law and determining the condition of the negro. Just realize he was ineffectively enslaved by law which declared him a chattel of his master. He was emancipated by law and then disenfranchised and segregated by law, and finally he is beginning to win equality by law." <b>source:</b> LBJ Library, SRT1365, Jun. 01, 1966
$\Box$ "There was a change from the legal movement in the courts to the protest movement in the streets." <b>source:</b> Columbia Center for Oral History, 10060552_03_01_s, Apr 13, 1977
"I got in touch with the students that were picketing and pledged the entire support of the Legal Defense Fund to protect their legal rights. We even set up a huge bail fund in order to assure that they would not go to jail." <b>source:</b> Columbia Center for Oral History, 10060552_03_01_s, Apr 13, 1977

### Quotations from SHERRYLIN IFILL

Former President and Director-Counsel, Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF), Vernon E. Jordan, Jr., Esq., and Endowed Chair in Civil Rights, Howard University

$^{igsqc}$ "LDF [Legal Defense Fund] under Thurgood Marshall's leadership however they were torn
about the docket of cases that they had, they were there. They represented the marchers in
Selma, they represented Albany, Georgia, they represented King in Birmingham." source:
interview, 06/18/2025

- "When there are changes happening in your country, when there's unrest, when there's unfairness, people look to lawyers for the answer. So law and lawyers are very important tools in the toolbox of the very long, many hundred years quest of Black people to be free and full citizens in this country. Now, it is not exclusive of protest, of boycott, of scholarship, of journalism. Black people have needed all of those things, of art, to forge a path of liberation. But, none of it works without law." source: interview, 06/18/2025
- "It's so hard, I think, for people to understand the level of terror millions of Black people lived under during this period and how little recourse there was for it. People tend to talk about LDF's work as impact litigation, which it is. Sometimes we just take cases because it's just too awful and you cannot turn away from the truth of it." **source:** interview, 06/18/2025

# Quotations from WIL HAYGOOD Author of Showdown: Thurgood Marshall and the Supreme Court Nomination That Changed America, and Author of The Butler: A Witness to History "Thurgood had to look around the country and see all these laws and since the laws were justified in court, he had to unjustify those laws." source: interview, 5/28/2024 "Black folk, they would sometimes ride into the local courthouse on mules and horses. The night before they would pack a lunch. They wanted their sons and daughters to see this Black figure, it was like he had dropped from heaven." source: interview, 5/28/2024 "I think it's just an astounding goal that he set for himself, to break apart laws and then stitch the Black family into the fabric of the American flag." source: interview, 5/28/2024

### Quotation from SHERYLL D. CASHIN

Carmack Waterhouse Professor of Law, Civil Rights and Social Justice, Georgetown University

□ "He successfully argued, not just Brown but 32 cases before the Supreme Court, and won 29 of them and many of those victories knocked down planks of Jim Crow." **source:** Interview, 5/06/2024

### **Quotations from GILBERT KING**

Author of Devil in the Grove: Thurgood Marshall, the Groveland Boys, and the Dawn of a New America

"He'd go on the road into these hostile environments. Here he was, getting chased around by the Klan and having to stay in different houses each night so that the night riders wouldn't get to him. Bombs were being thrown through front windows." **source:** interview, 5/28/2024

### Quotation from THE HONORABLE ROBERT BELL

Chief Judge, Maryland Court of Appeals (1996-2013)

"The whole point of the protest was to provide a vehicle by which one could argue, a particular result based on the Constitution. The lawyer's job was to ensure that position was presented in the courts, and hopefully get the right result. If they couldn't get that result, then of course, they were trying to keep the people out of jail. Then you had other people who were engaged in raising the money for bail and that kind of thing, and you had others who were strategizing what issues to raise, and where to raise them. And then the others, like students, were out there carrying it out." **source:** interview, 06/18/2025

### **Quotation from JOHN MARSHALL**

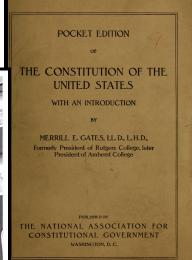
Son of Thurgood Marshall, Former Virginia State Trooper, Former U.S. Marshall

"I remember once we were sitting on the train to go to New York and my dad got very quiet. I'll never forget it. He got very quiet. And I looked at them and there was a tear coming down from his eye, and he said, as I look out this window, I'm reminded of all the times, all the trains I rode. After he would leave town and those people that protected him. He said I can see them clear as day. And he felt guilty. But ultimately he would always call those people the unsung heroes of the civil rights movement. The people who may have lost their jobs because of those cases, may have lost their homes because of those cases, and may have been hurt or worse because they felt the need to stand up for their rights." source: interview, 2/02/2025

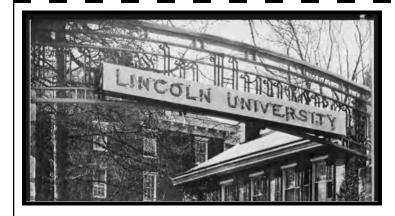
Why was Thurgood Marshall called "Mr. Civil Rights"?  Directions: Explain the two quotations you have checked off and their connection to the name "Mr. Civil Rights."
Quotation 1: Name of person: Explain the connection to the name "Mr. Civil Rights":
Quotation 2: Name of person:  Explain the connection to the name "Mr. Civil Rights":

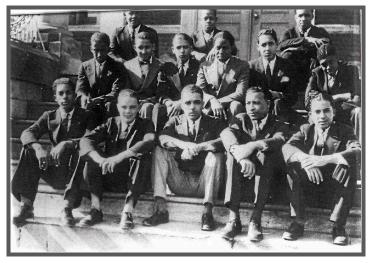


















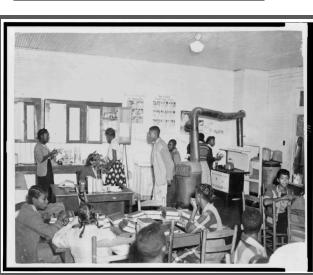








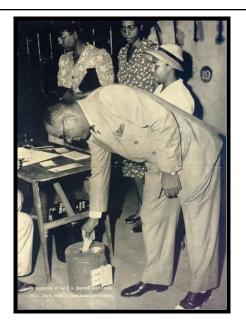




A Study of Educational
Inequalities
In
South Carolina







# Supreme Court Outlaws Southern Democrat Ban on Negro Primary Voting Washington, D. C.—In a precedent-smashing decision the Supreme Court of the United States, Monday upheld the

right of Negroes to vote in the Texas Democratic primaries. By an 8 to 1 vote, the Court decided in favor of Lonnie E. Smith of Houston, Texas. Smith sued the Harris County

election officials for damages and judgment because he was refused the right to vote in the 1940 Democratic primaries. Justice Stanley Reed read the decision for the majority. He stated:

"The court has ruled out the doctrine that the Democratic party as a private organization has the right to make rules on who should vote in Texas primaries. Texas elections are part of the Federal election and therefore subject to the Federal Constitution."

this day and time only."

Justice Roberts' reference to "intolerance for former justices" is evidently an implication that the more recently appointed justices are more liberal in their attitude toward social legislation and issues affecting the welfare of Negroes.

This decision, with its far reach. ing implications bearing on the problem of the southern Negro and the vote, is one of the most impor

Case(s):





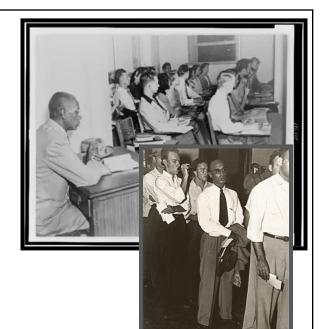




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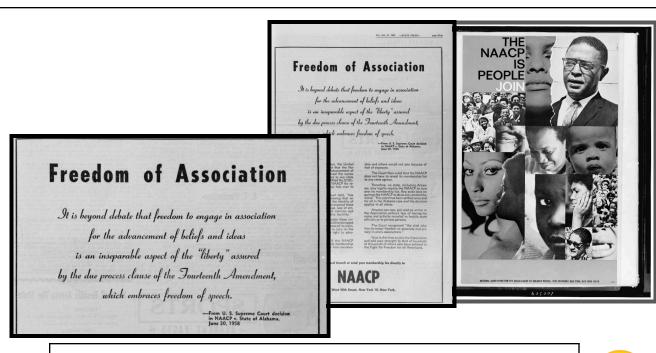
# A GREAT NEW DAY FOR AMERICANS New 17-NAACP Freedom Day! the day the Supreme Court granted a new birth of freedom to public education the day you can do something to win further rights for America's racial minorities





Case(s):





Case(s):



Case(s):

