

Civil Right Act: Segregation in School System

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TITLE VII OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964

An Act to enforce the constitutional right to vote, to confer jurisdiction upon the district courts of the United States to provide relief against discrimination in public accommodations, to authorize the attorney General to institute suits to protect constitutional rights in public facilities and public education, to extend the Commission on Civil Rights, to prevent discrimination in federally assisted programs, to establish a Commission on Equal Employment Opportunity, and for other purposes (www.eeoc.gov/policy/vii.html).

The Civil Rights Act of July 2, 1964 was landmark legislation in the United States that outlawed segregation in the US schools and public places. It was first conceived to help African Americans, when the bill was amended it was to protect women in courts, and explicitly included white people for the first time. To compel segregation in schools, housing, or hiring it was illegal under the Civil Rights clause. This bill was weak for many years, but became strong during later years.

This paper is to tell my experience of segregation in the 60's and 70's within the school system. Being an African American female born in Tennessee during the 50's, my worldview was limited because of my cultural, poverty, and racism. I can remember having all black teachers in elementary school, we had old worn books and just a few students were good readers. There were no K-schools or daycare for Blacks. The school supplies were limited because of my family socioeconomic status. My parent's dropped-out of school to work, and my father joined the Military Service. They worked day and

night, to feed and clothe nine children. In Junior High School, I went to a desegregated school; it was the first time I had ever been around Caucasian people. Desegregated schools to me was a nightmare, it was very discouraging. All the teachers were white, and only a few black students. My parents felt education was a way out of poverty, and my parents felt this was a big deal. So, I kept all my feelings to myself. Teachers made fun of the black children because of their learning disability. They would make us stand and read in front of everybody and allow the white children to call us names. This was degrading to me because I did not understand. I began to take it out on God since He created everything. I did not understand why the white children read fast and the blacks read slowly. I did not understand why teachers discriminated against me because of the color of my skin. I did not understand why the principle allowed the white children to run us home from school every day. I did not understand why they had silky hair and I had coarse hair. I did not understand how a God who created everything could be prejudiced toward me. There was a time in my life, that I wanted to be a Civil Rights Leader to abolish this type of foolishness toward people because of the color of there skin. After my father died, I went to an all black school. Most of the students there were not on their grade level.

I believe The No Child Left Behind Act will change the future in the school system. All children will have an opportunity to grow, be protected, and have equal education.

The No child Left Behind Act of 2001, reauthorized a number of federal programs aiming to improve the performance of U.S. primary and secondary schools by

increasing the standards of accountability for states, school districts, and schools, as well as providing parents more flexibility in choosing which schools their children will attend. Additionally, it promoted an increased focus on reading and re-authorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. The Act was passed in the House of Representatives on May 23, 2001, Senate on June 14, 2001 and signed into law on January 8, 2002 (www.eeoc.gov/policy).