



It's Not Just about
Black & White

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Proyecto Derechos Civiles



Before Brown

- ❧ 1946 Méndez vs. Westminster outlawed segregation of Mexican children in Orange County California
- ❧ 1948 Delgado vs Bastrop IUSD in Texas restricted segregation of Mexican children to first grade English Learners
- ❧ Mexicans are viewed legally as “Caucasian” but cases helped lay foundation for Brown
- ❧ Language difference rationale for segregation



But segregation of

Latinos continued

relatively unabated

☞ 1971 U.S. Commission on Civil Rights

Mexican American Education Study

found widespread segregation,

inequalities, exclusion based on

language

☞ 1970 Carter, Mexican Americans in the

Southwest, A History of Neglect

1960's -- 1970's: Language Becomes the Issue

- ⌘ “Hispanics” seek a political identity and an issue of their own
- ⌘ Tensions between the Black and Hispanic communities over the impact of desegregation plans on bilingual instruction, political consolidation, and commitment to desegregation

Nixon Administration Drives a Wedge

- ❧ 1969 Nixon administration weakens enforcement of busing, but woos Hispanics with support for bilingual education*
- ❧ Finds bilingual education to be the remedy for Latinos rather than desegregation
- ❧ 1970 memo requires plan for bilingual education wherever there are concentrations of LEP students



1974 Lau Decision



- ⌘ Although brought on behalf of Chinese students, Lau rallied Latinos
- ⌘ Now with the law behind them, Latinos organize to defend bilingual instruction
- ⌘ Desegregation issue takes a back seat



Meanwhile. . . .



- ☞ Between 1968 - 2005 massive demographic shift:
- ☞ “Latino” population increases by 380%
- ☞ Black population increases 33%
- ☞ Whites decline by 20%
- ☞ Two-thirds Mexican origin, but many other groups
- ☞ Greatest growth in the southern states

Meanwhile, Percent Students in 90%+ Non- white Schools

	1968	1988	2007
Black	64%	32%	38.5%
Latino	23%	33%	40%



Missed Opportunities

- ❧ Divisions between Blacks and Latinos served the purpose of social conservatives
- ❧ Political marginalization drives Blacks and Latinos to compete for political recognition



Looking Forward



- ❧ Blacks and Latinos form majority in all major urban districts
- ❧ Political maturation has occurred
- ❧ Both suffer language discrimination
- ❧ Both suffer isolation
- ❧ New opportunities for political collaboration