

## **“Separate but Equal”**

Cox was brought up during the time period after the famous Plessy V. Ferguson case which set the standard for not only African American Education but also African American standard of living. In 1892, Homer Plessy was arrested and put in jail for sitting in a “white car” on a train. Plessy charged the state of Louisiana claiming that the Separate Car Act was unconstitutional. John Howard Ferguson was the judge presiding over the case. Ferguson ruled that the State could set the regulations for all trains owned by and operated within the state. Plessy appealed to the Supreme Court. The judgment is as follows:

"That [the Separate Car Act] does not conflict with the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery...is too clear for argument...A statute which implies merely a legal distinction between the white and colored races -- a distinction which is founded in the color of the two races, and which must always exist so long as white men are distinguished from the other race by color -- has no tendency to destroy the legal equality of the two races...The object of the Fourteenth Amendment was undoubtedly to enforce the absolute equality of the two races before the law, but in the nature of things it could not have been intended to abolish distinctions based upon color, or to enforce social, as distinguished from political equality, or a commingling of the two races upon terms unsatisfactory to either."

One does not need for me to point out the absurdity and nauseating aspects of this ruling. Regardless of my opinions on the matter, this ruling made the statement “separate but equal” America’s new doctrine. As a result, Cox attended a segregated school. However, Black Schools were far from equal to White Schools. They had less funding and few resources. There has been an account of an African American boy removing the cover from his schoolbook only to find that it had been discarded from a white school. The lack of resources leads to fewer advances within the education system. I would argue that this was yet another tactic to oppress African Americans keeping them safe from challenging white dominance. I must add yet again that Cox is amazing for overcoming all of the obstacles placed before him.

### **More on the History of African American Oppression:**

<http://www.edst.purdue.edu/georgeoff/400/BLACKEDUC.htm>

<http://www.clas.ufl.edu/users/brundage/website/education.htm>

<http://www.watson.org/~lisa/blackhistory/post-civilwar/plessy.html>

<http://www.watson.org/~lisa/blackhistory/early-civilrights/higher.html>

<http://www.watson.org/~lisa/blackhistory/early-civilrights/brown.html>

<http://www.watson.org/~lisa/blackhistory/school-integration/index.html>

[http://www.lrainc.com/swtaboo/library/lra\\_si.html](http://www.lrainc.com/swtaboo/library/lra_si.html)