

The Struggle for Civil Rights

The movement for African American civil rights began long before the Brown decision and continues long after. Still, the defeat of the separate-but-equal legal doctrine undercut one of the major pillars of white supremacy in America. In the decades that followed, a heroic ongoing campaign for civil rights has lifted the nation closer to its ideals of freedom.

Source and to learn more: National Museum of American History
<http://americanhistory.si.edu/brown/history/6-legacy/achieving-equality.html>

Many of us take our right to vote as a given, forgetting that some struggled to attain that right. This, the first of two posts exploring the work of two groups to gain full voting rights, will take a look at primary sources from the Library of Congress that document the long road toward the full enfranchisement of African Americans.

The original Constitution of the United States was nearly mute on voting rights, ceding them to the states to determine. The [15th Amendment](#) to the Constitution confers voting rights on African Americans, declaring that “The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.”

However, many states got around that by imposing poll taxes, literacy tests, and other restrictive practices, sometimes known as “Jim Crow” laws.

Source and to Learn More: Library of Congress
<http://blogs.loc.gov/teachers/2012/10/voting-rights-the-full-enfranchisement-of-african-americans/>