

Summary: Civil Rights

Segregation by Race

In the early 1900s, segregation laws stopped black Americans from living freely among white Americans. African Americans were not allowed in the same schools, restaurants, hotels, or beaches as whites. Racism caused some white groups like the Ku Klux Klan to attack African Americans and whites who supported integration.

Even so, African Americans in Florida continued to demand their rights as American citizens. In 1920, Eartha White helped black women in Jacksonville vote. In 1945, Edward Graham worked to integrate Florida's beaches. Florida's African American leaders worked against racism. In 1954, the highest court in the United States said that segregation was wrong. Slowly, Florida's schools became integrated.

The Civil Rights Movement

In 1955, police arrested an African American named Rosa Parks in Montgomery, Alabama. She would not give her bus seat to a white man. She was arrested. Parks's arrest caused civil rights leaders to organize a boycott of Montgomery's buses. Finally, the court ruled that segregating buses was against the law. This success brought more protests. Martin Luther King, Jr. was a civil rights leader who asked people to fight injustice with nonviolence. Protesters held nonviolent marches and sit-ins. They often faced threats or beatings. Many were jailed. In 1964, the government passed laws to end segregation and protect the civil rights of all citizens.

Equal Opportunities

The success of the civil rights movement caused other groups to fight for equal rights too. The Seminole and Miccosukee Indians demanded payment for land the government had taken from them over 100 years earlier. In 1967 the Seminole elected Betty Mae Tiger Jumper as their chairperson. She was one of the first women to lead any modern American Indian nation. She worked to better the living conditions of her people.

Other women held marches and rallies to protest unfair treatment in workplaces and colleges. They wanted the same opportunities that men had.

Before You Read

Find and circle each vocabulary word.

integration *noun*, the bringing together of different races

racism *noun*, prejudice based on race

boycott *noun*, a protest in which people refuse to use certain goods or services

nonviolence *noun*, peaceful

After You Read

REVIEW Name some ways that African Americans fought

discrimination. Draw a box around the paragraph that tells how Eartha White and others fought for civil rights.

REVIEW In what ways did Rosa Parks's arrest help the civil rights movement? Highlight three sentences that tell what happened after Rosa Parks's arrest.

REVIEW What caused American Indians and women to also fight for their rights? Underline the sentence that tells what the civil rights movement caused other groups to do.