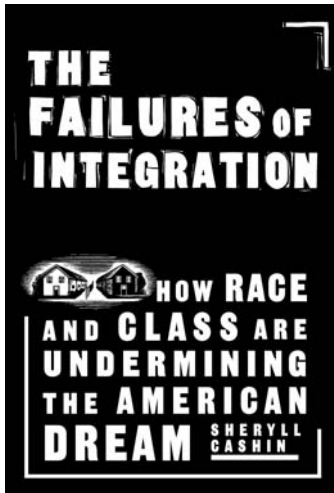


THE FAILURES OF INTEGRATION

How Race and Class Are Undermining the American Dream

by **Sheryll Cashin**



"In this extremely important work, Sheryll Cashin examines the unfinished legacy of *Brown v. Board of Education*. Professor Cashin sounds a necessary alarm about the current "post civil rights" vision of American life that manages to celebrate *Brown* while downplaying the integrationist ideal at the heart of the case. This book's message is long overdue. It should spur important discussions about America's future as a multi-cultural, multi-racial democracy."

--Vernon E. Jordan, Jr., author of *Vernon Can Read!*

"[S]uperbly erudite and enormously thoughtful... anyone who wants to celebrate *Brown*'s 50th anniversary, rather than dismiss it, will draw practical inspiration from Cashin's eloquent call for a national recommitment to *Brown*'s timeless ideals."

--David Garrow, *Chicago Tribune*

"Cashin is the only one of the three authors willing to discuss the denigration of education by some black pupils, the self-destructive notion that achieving in school amounts to 'acting white.' She also asks the difficult but necessary questions about why public schools in the affluent black suburbs of Washington perform worse than those of neighboring, whiter communities."

--*New York Times Book Review*

On May 17, 1954, the Supreme Court unanimously declared that separate educational facilities for blacks and whites are inherently "unequal" and, as such, violate the 14th Amendment. The landmark decision, *Brown v. Board of Education*, sounded the death knell for legal segregation, but fifty years later, de facto segregation in America thrives. And Sheryll Cashin believes that it is getting worse.

THE FAILURES OF INTEGRATION: *How Race and Class Are Undermining the American Dream* (May 2004; \$26.00; 320 pages; ISBN 158648124X) is a provocative look at how segregation by race and class is ruining American democracy. Only a small minority of the affluent are truly living the American Dream, complete with attractive, job-rich suburbs, reasonably low taxes, good public schools, and little violent crime. For the remaining majority of Americans, segregation comes with stratospheric costs. In a society that sets up "winner" and "loser" communities and schools defined by race and class, racial minorities in particular are locked out of the "winner" column. African-Americans bear the heaviest burden. But with the expensive price tag attached to "winner" communities, middle income whites also struggle to afford homes in good neighborhoods with acceptable schools.

Cashin shows why separation is not working for most Americans. In a rapidly diversifying American, she argues that we need a transformation—a jettisoning of the now ingrained assumption that separation is acceptable—in order to solve the riddle of inequality in America. Our public policy choices must be premised on an integrationist vision if we are to achieve our highest aspiration and pursue the dream that America says it embraces: full and equal opportunity for all.



photo credit: Rhoda Baer

Sheryll Cashin was born and raised in Huntsville, Alabama, where her parents were political activists. She was a law clerk to Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall and served in the Clinton White House as an advisor on urban and economic policy. A Professor of Law at Georgetown University, she is a frequent television commentator on law, politics, and race relations.

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