

Racial integration

Racial integration, or simply **integration**, includes desegregation (the process of ending systematic racial segregation). In addition to desegregation, integration includes goals such as leveling barriers to association, creating equal opportunity regardless of race, and the development of a culture that draws on diverse traditions, rather than merely bringing a racial minority into the majority culture. Desegregation is largely a legal matter, integration largely a social one.

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Planners from the Ekurhuleni Town Planning department on a routine site visit in the Benoni. The team's composition is a reflection of the New South Africa racial integration policies

Distinguishing *integration* from *desegregation*

Morris J. MacGregor, Jr. in his paper "Integration of the Armed Forces 1940–1969" writes concerning the words *integration* and *desegregation*:

... In recent years many historians have come to distinguish between these like-sounding words.. The movement toward desegregation, breaking down the nation's Jim Crow system, became increasingly popular in the decade after World War II. Integration, on the other hand, Professor Oscar Handlin maintains, implies several things not yet necessarily accepted in all areas of American society. In one sense it refers to the "levelling of all barriers to association other than those based on ability, taste, and personal preference";^[1] in other words, providing equal opportunity. But in another sense integration calls for the random distribution of a minority throughout society. Here, according to Handlin, the emphasis is on racial balance in areas of occupation, education, residency, and the like.

From the beginning the military establishment rightly understood that the breakup of the all-black unit would in a closed society necessarily mean more than mere desegregation. It constantly used the terms integration and equal treatment and opportunity to describe its racial goals. Rarely, if ever, does one find the word desegregation in military files that include much correspondence.^[1]



A white child and black child together at a parade in North College Hill, Ohio, USA

Similarly, Keith M. Woods writing on the need for precision in journalistic language writes, "*Integration* happens when a monolith is changed, like when a black family moves into an all-white neighborhood. Integration happens even without a mandate from the law. *Desegregation*," on the other hand, "was the legal remedy to segregation."^[2] Making almost the same point, Henry Organ, identifying himself as " a participant in the Civil Rights Movement on the (San Francisco) Peninsula in the '60s ... and ... an African American," wrote in 1997, " The term 'desegregation' is normally reserved to the legal/legislative domain, and it was the legalization of discrimination in public institutions based on race that many fought against in the 1960s. The term 'integration,' on the other hand, pertains to a social domain; it does and should refer to individuals of different background who opt to interact."^[3]

In their book *By the Color of Our Skin* (1999) Leonard Steinhorn and Barbara Diggs-Brown – who also make a similar distinction between *desegregation* and *integration* – write "... television has ... give[n] white Americans the sensation of having meaningful, repeated contact with blacks without actually having it. We call this phenomenon virtual integration, and it is the primary reason why the integration illusion – the belief that we are moving toward a colorblind nation – has such a powerful influence on race relations in America today." Reviewing this book in the libertarian magazine *Reason*, Michael W. Lynch sums up some of their conclusions as, "Blacks and whites live, learn, work, pray, play, and entertain separately." He cites Stephan and Abigail Themstrom's *America in Black and White* as making the case to the contrary, gives anecdotal evidence on both sides of the question, and writes:

The problem, as I see it, is that access to the public spheres, specifically the commercial sphere, often depends on being comfortable with the norms of white society. If a significant number of black children aren't comfortable with them, it isn't by choice: It's because they were isolated from those norms. It's one thing for members of the black elite and upper middle class to choose to retire to predominantly black neighborhoods after a lucrative day's work in white America. It's quite another for people to be unable to enter that commercial sphere because they spent their formative years in a community that didn't, or couldn't, prepare them for it. Writes [Harvard University sociologist Orlando] Patterson, "The greatest problem now facing African-Americans is their isolation from the tacit norms of the dominant culture, and this is true of all classes."^[4]

Distinction not universally accepted

Although widespread, this distinction between *integration* and *desegregation* is not universally accepted. For example, it is possible to find references to "court-ordered integration"^[5] from sources such as the *Detroit News*,^[6] PBS,^[7] or even Encarta.^[8] These same sources also use the phrase "court-ordered desegregation", apparently with exactly the same meaning;^{[9][10]} the *Detroit News* uses both expressions interchangeably in the same article.^[6]

When the two terms are confused, it is almost always to use *integration* in the narrower, more legalistic sense of *desegregation*; one rarely, if ever, sees *desegregation* used in the broader cultural sense.

See also

- Civil rights movement
- Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity
- Auto-segregation
- Silk Road discusses an instance of racial integration in Southern Asia in the Middle Ages.
- Intercultural Garden
- Online segregation
- Anti-discrimination law

Lawsuits

- United States v. Fordice

Notes

- Morris J. MacGregor, Jr. *Integration of the Armed Forces 1940–1965* (<http://www.history.army.mil/books/integration/IAF-FM.htm>) Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20100721102246/http://www.history.army.mil/books/integration/iaf-fm.htm>) 2010-07-21 at the Wayback Machine, United States Army Center of Military History, Washington D.C. (1985). The linked copy is on the Army's official site. The Handlin quote is footnoted within the MacGregor piece as Oscar Handlin, "The Goals of Integration", *Daedalus* 95 (Winter 1966): 270.
- Keith M. Woods, *Disentangling Desegregation Discourse* (<http://www.poynter.org/column.asp?id=58&aid=60326>) Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20041009204314/http://www.poynter.org/column.asp?id=58&aid=60326>) 2004-10-09 at the Wayback Machine, Poynter Online, February 3, 2004. Accessed March 26, 2006.
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- The Evolution of Brown v. Board of Education (https://www.pbs.org/beyondbrown/history/factsheet_history.html), part of *Beyond Brown*, PBS. Accessed March 26, 2006.
- President Kennedy Expresses Outrage at Alabama Deaths (http://encarta.msn.com/sidebar_761594304/President_Kennedy_Expresses_Outrage_at_Alabama_Deaths.html) Archived (https://web.archive.org/web/20040926053701/http://encarta.msn.com/sidebar_761594304/President_Kennedy_Expresses_Outrage_at_Alabama_Deaths.html) 2004-09-26 at the Wayback Machine (sidebar), MSN Encarta. (Premium content.) Accessed March 26, 2006.

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- Steinhorn, Leonard and Diggs-Brown, Barbara, *By the Color of Our Skin: The Illusion of Integration and the Reality of Race*. New York: Dutton, 1999. ISBN 0-525-94359-5
- Themstrom, Stephan and Abigail, *America in Black and White: One Nation, Indivisible* New York, NY: Touchstone, 1997. ISBN 0-684-84497-4.
- Adel Iskandar and Hakem Rustom, *From Paris to Cairo: Resistance of the Unacculturated* (<http://ambassadors.net/archives/issue19/opinions2.htm>) *The Ambassadors* online magazine.
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External links

- Memphis Civil Rights Digital Archive (<http://www.crossroadstofreedom.org/>)
- New York Civil Rights Coalition (<http://nycivilrights.org>) Prominent integrationist group
- Interview with Justin Massa, Founder of MoveSmart (<https://web.archive.org/web/20081204122316/http://makesomethinghappen.net/2008/06/10/mshcast-2-justin-massa-integration-20-and-movesmartorg/>)
- Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (https://web.archive.org/web/20120402122117/http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=%2Fprogram_offices%2Ffair_housing_equal_opp)
- File a housing discrimination complaint (https://web.archive.org/web/20131005022332/http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=%2Fprogram_offices%2Ffair_housing_equal_opp%2Fonline-complaint)
- Stories of Race and Identity Issues in Global Cultures (<http://glimpse.org/Race-Identity>) Compiled by the Glimpse Foundation

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