



The African American Struggle for Secondary Schooling, 1940-1980: Closing the Graduation Gap

John L. Rury, Shirley A. Hill

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"Based on prodigious research, *The African American Struggle for Secondary Schooling* sets a new standard of excellence in social history and policy studies. The authors evocatively recreate the passions of the civil rights movement and centrality of public schools in the ongoing quest for justice, opportunity, and freedom."

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"This book is a rich and compelling addition to the literature on secondary education generally and on secondary education for African Americans specifically. It will set the standard for historical studies on American high schools for a long time to come." -- **Jeffrey Mirel**, David L. Angus Collegiate Chair of Education, Professor of History, University of Michigan

"*The African American Struggle for Secondary Schooling* fills a major gap in the history of African American educational history. This book will be on my shelf and will no doubt be on the shelves of scholars and students who study African American educational history." -- **Thomas V. O'Brien**, Professor and Chair, Department of Educational Studies and Research, University of Southern Mississippi

"This is the only book-length account of the growth and impact of secondary education for African Americans post-1930. With a unique and original analysis, the authors frame key themes not only within the common historiographical tradition of an unfolding of 'growth and development' over time, but correctly understand that high school entailed opportunities for 'attainment' in a broader social sense as well." -- **Michael Fultz**, Professor, Department of Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin--Madison

This is the first comprehensive account of African American secondary education in the postwar era. Drawing on quantitative datasets, as well as oral history, this compelling narrative examines how African Americans narrowed the racial gap in high school completion. The authors explore regional variations in high school attendance across the United States and how intraracial factors affected attendance within racial groups. They also examine the larger social historical context, such as the national high school revolution, the civil rights movement, campaigns to expand schooling and urging youth to stay in school, and Black migration northward. Closing chapters focus on desegregation and the "urban crisis" of the 1960s and 1970s that accelerated "white flight" and funding problems for urban school systems. The conclusion summarizes these developments and briefly looks at the period since 1980, when secondary attainment levels stopped advancing for Blacks and Whites alike.

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