The Civil Rights Movement.

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**Geographic Terms:**

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**Abstract:**

Focuses on the role of Doctor Marthin **Luther** **King** Jr. in the civil rights movement in the United States. Cases of racial discrimination and **segregation**; Support of **King** and Thurgood Marshall toward affirmative action programs and the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

**Number:**

THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

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**Section:**

The Workforce 80

60 Decades before affirmative action, and the representation of large numbers of women and people of color in the American workplace, Dr. **MartinLuther** **King** Jr. was speaking passionately for the rights of poor, disadvantaged, and racially oppressed people. **Segregation** was rampant in both schools and the workplace. **King**'s eloquent message served as the foundation of a movement for civil rights that redirected the course of history.

In 1952, the U.S. Supreme Court declared school **segregation** unconstitutional; in 1955, Rosa Parks defied an ordinance requiring segregated seating on city buses, an event that triggered a successful yearlong bus boycott--led by **King**--in Montgomery, Alabama. Parks's refusal to surrender her seat to a white male passenger prompted a tidal wave of protests, bloody attacks, and student sit-ins in the late 1950s and 1960s that reverberated throughout the country.

In 1957, a mob of 1,000 townspeople in Little Rock, Arkansas, tried to prevent black students from remaining at a recently integrated school. President Dwight Eisenhower sent in paratroopers and 10,000 National Guardsmen. In 1961, busloads of freedom riders were brutalized when they waged a campaign to try to end the **segregation** of bus terminals. **King**, a Baptist minister, once declared, "I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become a reality."

As **King** took to the pulpit and to the streets, another catalyst for racial justice, Thurgood Marshall, was introducing sweeping changes in the courtroom. The two played major roles in the campaign for affirmative action and for the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The legislation bars discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Many significant changes in the basic rules of the workplace in the 20th century resulted from the grass-roots movement.

PHOTO (COLOR): In 1952, the U.S. Supreme Court declared school **segregation** unconstitutional; in 1955, Rosa Parks defied an ordinance requiring segregated seating on city buses, an event that triggered a successful yearlong bus boycott--led by **King**-in Montgomery, Alabama.

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