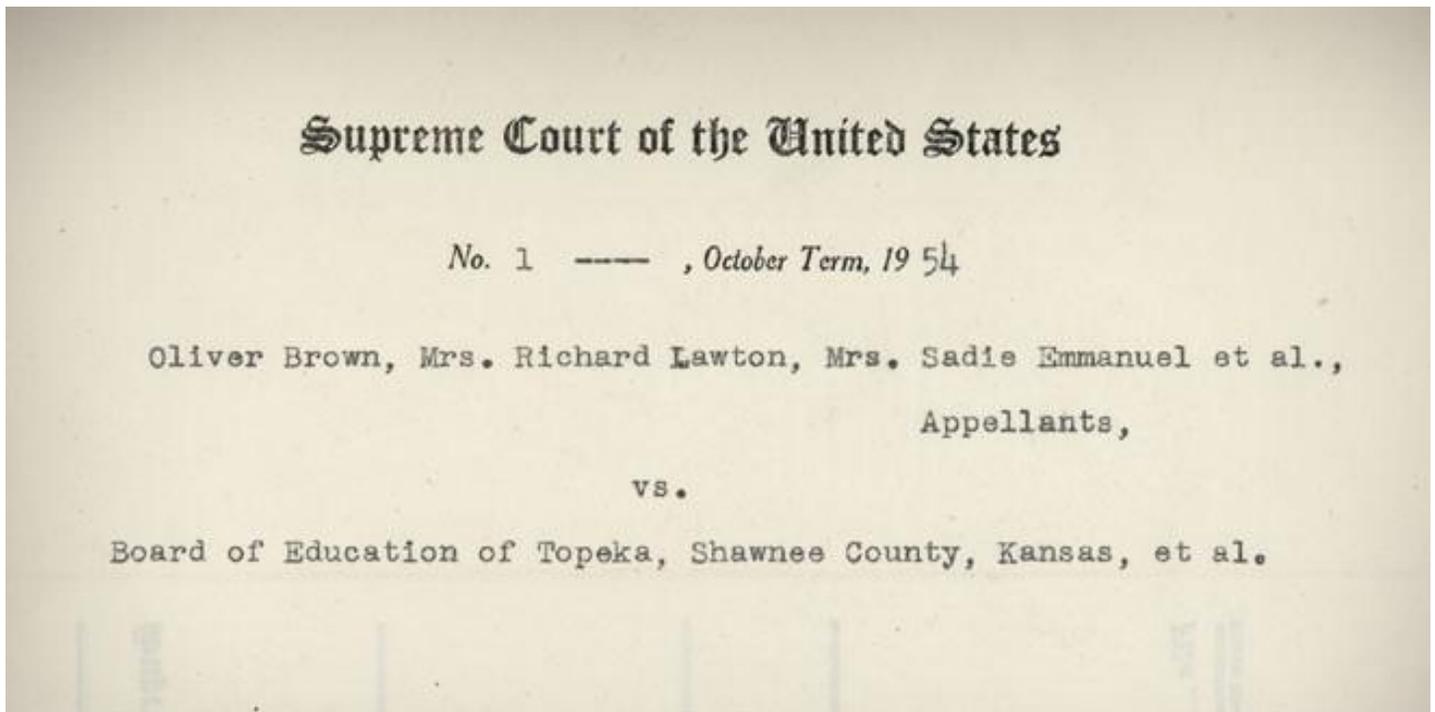


GOP: On the Right Side of History



Brown v Board of Education

Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, written by Chief Justice Earl Warren, was a landmark United States Supreme Court case in which the Court declared state laws establishing separate public schools for black and white students to be unconstitutional. Handed down on May 17, 1954, the Warren Court's unanimous (9–0) decision stated that "separate educational facilities are inherently unequal." As a result, de jure racial segregation was ruled a violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. This ruling paved the way for integration and was a major victory of the Civil Rights Movement, and a model for many future impact litigation cases.

The United States and the Soviet Union were both at the height of the Cold War during this time, and U.S. officials, including Supreme Court Justices, were highly aware of the harm that segregation and racism played on America's international image. When Justice William Douglas (appointed by Franklin Roosevelt) traveled to India in 1950, the first question he was asked was, "Why does America tolerate the lynching of Negroes?" Douglas later wrote that he had learned from his travels that "the attitude of the United States toward its colored minorities is a powerful factor in our relations with India." Chief Justice Earl Warren, a former Republican Governor of California, Vice Presidential candidate and nominated to the Supreme Court by President Eisenhower, echoed Douglas's concerns in a 1954 speech to the American Bar Association, proclaiming that "Our American system like all others is on trial both at home and abroad, ... the extent to which we maintain the spirit of our constitution with its Bill of Rights, will in the long run do more to make it both secure and the object of adulation than the number of hydrogen bombs we stockpile." (Source: Wikipedia)