

The *Plessy v. Ferguson* Supreme Court Case

In the 1896 legal case called *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the Supreme Court ruled that laws requiring segregation were permitted.

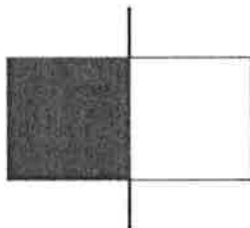


The *Plessy* case was started by a group of whites and blacks in the city of New Orleans, Louisiana. The group was formed to try to stop a "Jim Crow" law created in that state in 1890. The law required that railroads in Louisiana had to provide separate railroad cars for blacks and whites.

A black man named Homer Plessy, who was part of the group, agreed to test the law. He rode in a "white" railroad car and was arrested. A judge in Louisiana named John Ferguson ruled that the state law was valid. Plessy was convicted of violating the law, and fined \$25 dollars.



Mr. Plessy and his friends then took the case to the U.S. Supreme Court. They argued that the Louisiana law violated the 14th Amendment to the Constitution, which requires "equal protection of the laws." The court ruled against Mr. Plessy. It said that laws requiring separate facilities for blacks and whites were permitted, as long as the facilities were equal.



Plessy v. Ferguson established the principle of "separate but equal" segregation. This allowed Jim Crow laws to continue spreading.