

6. Brown vs. the Board of Education

Commissioned by GALA Choruses, 2024

Stately ♩=103

(Howard University Alma Mater, under dialogue)

Lyrics by Kim Hines, Jane Ramsey Miller, & Steve Milloy

Music by Steve Milloy

Choir

Choir

NARR.1: Except for Black people. // We were given substandard housing, schools, and health care; we sat in designated seats on trains and buses, we could not enjoy pools or parks - and could only use toilets and drinking fountains marked: "Colored Only,"

NARR.2: That's what is known as "Jim Crow". The pursuit of happiness, eh?! (start vamp at m. 17)

Pno.

NARR.2: Now, Pauli is the only woman in her Law School class and speaks up during the discussion about fighting Jim Crow.

NARR.1: I questioned whether race should have been the main argument since separate but equal is NEVER equal... and members in the class, including Thurgood Marshall, led the class in raucous laughter. (choir laughs uproariously)

21 (21) NARR.2: But Pauli's gut told her that she was right.

Pno.

25 (25) *mp* *mf*

Choir

Pau-li had a thought, Not a lit-tle bit-ty thought But a thought so rad...

And an an-gle ne-ver taught...

Pno.

29

Choir

"Sep - a - rate" has ne - ver built laws that are e - qual. Se - gre - ga - tion meant to de - grade

Pno.

32

Choir

Black peo- ple, but the Four-teenth a - mend-ment says "e - qual rights for all" That's

Pno.

mf

35

Choir

"ALL" ev - 'ry - bod - y. Jim Crow's gon - na fall! So,

mf

Pno.

f

37 (37)

Choir

Pau - li let it stew, Then she

mf

For a month or may - be two Then she

Pno.

mf

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39

Choir

took those fier - y thoughts that were boil - in'. 'bout to brew... Grabbed the

took those fier - y thoughts that were boil -- in'. 'bout to brew

Pno.

41

S.

wea - pon at her hand, trust - y Smith-Co - ron - a, and let the words spew forth...

A.

oo ah oo ah let the words spew forth...

T.

oo ah oo ah let the words spew forth...

B.

oo ah oo ah let the words spew forth...

Pno.

44 *(imitating a typewriter...)*

S. dng krrr tik

A. dng krrr tik

T. dng krrr tik

B. dng krrr tik

Pno.

48 *mf* (48)

S. Let the words spew forth! Let the words spew forth!

A. Tell 'em what they need to know. Let your gen-ius mind flow.

T. Let the words spew forth! Let the words spew forth!

B. Tell 'em what they need to know. Let your gen-ius mind flow.

Pno. *sub.mf*

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52

S. Let the words spew forth! Go___ on, Paul-i.Had e-nough of Jim Crow!

A. Hit 'em blow by blow. Go___ on, Paul-i.Had e-nough of Jim Crow!

T. Let the words spew forth! Go___ on, Paul-i.Had e-nough of Jim Crow!

B. Hit 'em blow by blow. Go___ on, Paul-i.Had e-nough of Jim Crow!

Pno.

56 56 NARR.1 (as Pauli)

Narr. 1 *mf* "Sep - a - rate but e - qual", the ap - proach is all wrong. We can't ad - vance our rights with the

Pno. *mp*

59

Narr. 1

same old song...We need a legal lex-i-con that's bold and brave. E - qual-i - ty for ALL, that in-cludes

Pno.

63

Narr. 1

for-mer slaves! In the "four-teenth", I could make a plau-si - ble case that the

Pno.

66

Narr. 1

lan-guage is a - cross the board, not just a - bout race! No per-son may be set a - side or_

Pno.

Perusal Only

69

Narr. 1

— marked in - fe - ri - or.

mf *S. div* **f**

Choir

But this le - gi - sla - tion tipped the scales to keep whites su - pe - ri - or.

mf **f**

Pno.

mf

72

Choir

Ples - sy and Jim Crow dis - tort the laws of this land. And are re - li - a - bly pro - duc - tive aid - ing

mf

Pno.

75

Choir

rac - ist de - mands. sol - id ed - u - ca - tion Low wage

Kept from hous - ing, and health,

Pno.

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It features four systems of music. The first system includes a Narrator 1 part with lyrics '— marked in - fe - ri - or.' and a dynamic of *mf*, followed by a Choir part with lyrics 'But this le - gi - sla - tion tipped the scales to keep whites su - pe - ri - or.' and dynamics *mf* and **f**. The piano accompaniment (Pno.) has a dynamic of *mf*. The second system features the Choir with lyrics 'Ples - sy and Jim Crow dis - tort the laws of this land. And are re - li - a - bly pro - duc - tive aid - ing' and a dynamic of *mf*. The piano accompaniment continues. The third system features the Choir with lyrics 'rac - ist de - mands. sol - id ed - u - ca - tion Low wage' and a dynamic of *mf*. The piano accompaniment includes a triplet of eighth notes. The fourth system features the Choir with lyrics 'Kept from hous - ing, and health,' and a dynamic of *mf*. The piano accompaniment continues.

78

Choir

jobs, un - a - ble to build wealth.

Pno.

can't get a loan, Im - pos - si - ble to dredge our way

81

Narr. 1

When

Choir

keeps most Blacks cir - cling as per - pet - u - al vic - tims.

Pno.

out of 'the sys - tem' keeps

NARR.2

84

Narr. 1

Ne - gros live each day with - in these real mo - les - ta - tions,

Pno.

mp

86

Narr. 1

trau - ma is im - bued from gen - er - a - tion to gen - er - a - tion.

S.

(stage whisper) *p*

from gen - er -

A.

T.

B.

Pno.

88

S.

a - tion to gen - er - a - tion.

A.

p (stage whisper)

from gen - er - a - tion to gen - er - a - tion.

T.

p (stage whisper)

from gen - er - a - tion to gen - er - a - tion.

B.

p (stage whisper)

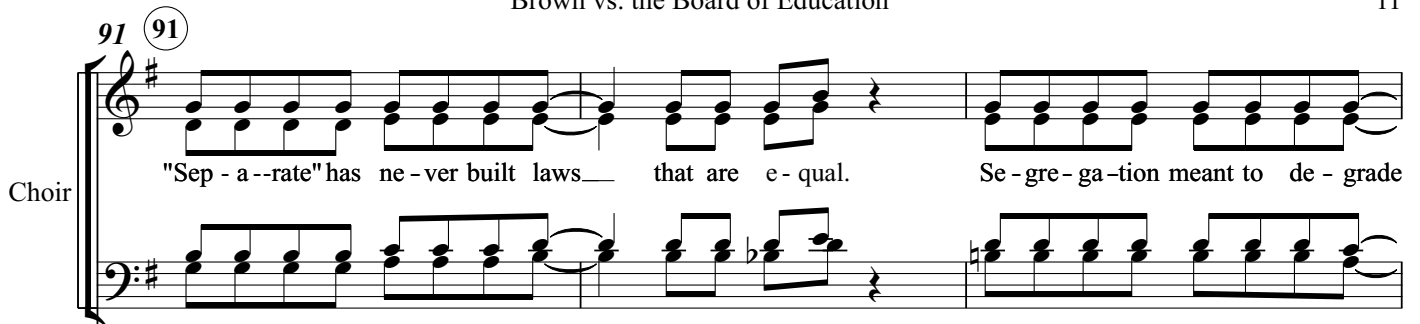
from gen - er - a - tion

Pno.

91 (91)

Choir

"Sep - a -- rate" has ne - ver built laws — that are e - qual. Se - gre - ga - tion meant to de - grade



Pno.

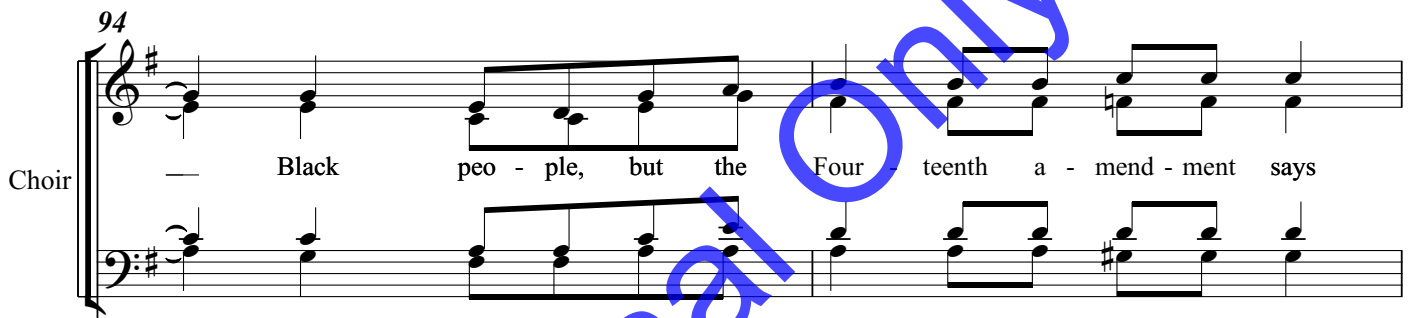
mp



94

Choir

Black peo - ple, but the Fourteenth a - mend - ment says



Pno.

mf



96

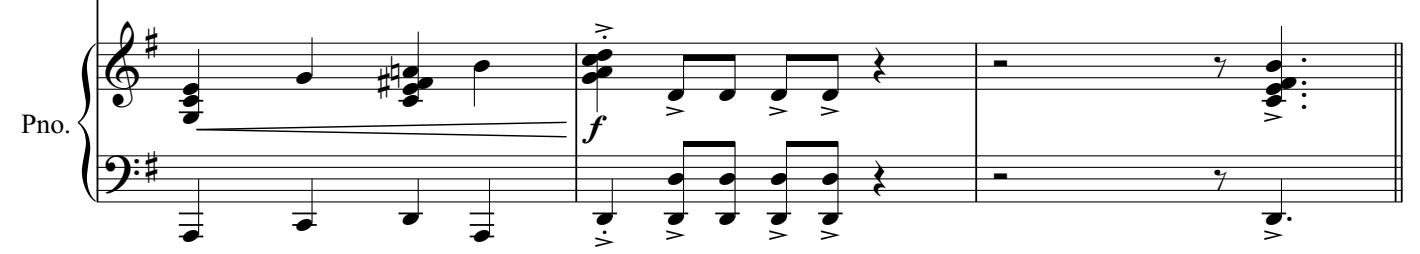
Choir

"e - qual rights for all" That's "ALL" ev - 'ry - bod - y. Jim Crow's gon - na fall! —



Pno.

f



99 *mf*

S. Let the words spew forth! Let the words spew forth!

A. *mf* Tell 'em what they need to know. Let your gen-ius mind flow.

T. *mf* Let the words spew forth! Let the words spew forth!

B. *mf* Tell 'em what they need to know. Let your gen-ius mind flow.

Pno. *mf*

103

S. Let the words spew forth! Go___ on, Paul-i.

A. Hit 'em blow by blow... *f* Had e-nough of Jim Crow!

T. Let the words spew forth! Go___ on, Paul-i.

B. Hit 'em blow by blow... *f* Had e-nough of Jim Crow!

Pno.

107

mf 108

S. Pau-li's typ-ing fin-gers soon de-vised a dif-frent song a-bout

A. Pau-li's typ-ing fin-gers soon de-vised a dif-frent song a-bout

T. Pau-li's typ-ing fin-gers soon de-vised a dif frent song a-bout

B. Pau-li's typ-ing fin-gers soon de-vised a dif frent song a-bout

Pno.

110

NARR.1 (as Pauli) *f*

The case__ must be o - ver-turned, e -

S. Ples - sy ver - sus Fer - gu - son and what went wrong!_

A. Ples - sy ver - sus Fer - gu - son and what went wrong!_

T. Ples - sy ver - sus Fer - gu - son and what went wrong!_

B. Ples - sy ver - sus Fer - gu - son and what went wrong!_

Pno. *mp*

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113

Narr. 1 *mf*
 rased, made ka - putt! That's the on - ly way we'll give the boot to Jim Crow's foot!

S. *mf*
 That's the on - ly way we'll give the boot to Jim Crow's foot!

A. *mf*
 That's the on - ly way we'll give the boot to Jim Crow's foot!

T. *mf*
 That's the on - ly way we'll give the boot to Jim Crow's foot!

B. *mf*
 That's the on - ly way we'll give the boot to Jim Crow's foot!

Pno. *mf*

NARR.1: Professor Robinson, I'll bet you \$10 that Plessy vs Ferguson will be overturned as unconstitutional within.. (pondering)... 25 years!

NARR.2 (as Robinson- *laughing*): Pauli, you've got yourself a bet! (*they shake hands, stop vamp*)

NARR.1: "Opposition to an idea I cared deeply about always aroused my latent mule-headedness, and I chose for my seminar paper the ambitious topic: "Should...Plessy v. Ferguson Be Overruled?" I typed it up without making a carbon copy and gave it to Professor Robinson. (*play meas.120*)

116

Pno. *p*

120 (120)

S. *mf*
Let the words spew forth!

A. *mf*
Tell 'em what they need to know.

T. *mf*
Let the words spew forth!

B. *mf*
Tell 'em what they need to know.

Pno. *mf*

123

S. Let the words spew forth! Let the words spew forth! Go_

A. Let your gen-ius mind flow. Hit 'em blow by blow...

T. Let the words spew forth! Let the words spew forth! Go_

B. Let your gen-ius mind flow. Hit 'em blow by blow...

Pno.

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127

S. — on, Paul-i.

A. *f*
Had e-nough of Jim Crow!

T. — on, Paul-i.

B. *f*
Had e-nough of Jim Crow!

Pno. *rit.* *mp*

NARR.1: Ten years later...

NARR.2: 1954.

NARR.1: A landmark case...

NARR.2: Brown versus the Board of Education, is won in the US Supreme Court.

NARR.1: (as Pauli, unexpectedly running into Robinson): Professor Robinson...

NARR.2: (as Spotswood Robinson): Ahh, Pauli Murray (*embarrassed with a chuckle*). Remember that paper you wrote 10 years ago? // Well, myself and Thurgood Marshall... Mmm, we used your paper as the basis of our argument in winning Brown vs. the Board of Education at the Supreme Court. (*play mm.133-134*)

132 G.P.

133 *Slower* ♩=103 *p*

Pno.

NARR.1: You used my paper as the basis of— in front of the Supreme Court? (*look of shock, and then indignation*)

I believe you owe me 10 dollars...sir! (*play mm.135-136*) (*on final beat, Pauli puts her hand out to collect*)

135 135 *A tempo 1* *ff* 8^{va}

Pno.