



More Than One Struggle: The Evolution of Black School Reform in Milwaukee

Jack Dougherty

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More Than One Struggle: The Evolution of Black School Reform in Milwaukee Jack Dougherty Traditional narratives of black educational history suggest that African Americans offered a unified voice concerning *Brown v. Board of Education*. Jack Dougherty counters this interpretation, demonstrating that black activists engaged in multiple, overlapping, and often conflicting strategies to advance the race by gaining greater control over schools.

Dougherty tells the story of black school reform movements in Milwaukee from the 1930s to the 1990s, highlighting the multiple perspectives within each generation. In profiles of four leading activists, he reveals how different generations redefined the meaning of the *Brown* decision over time to fit the historical conditions of their particular struggles. William Kelley of the Urban League worked to win teaching jobs for blacks and to resettle Southern black migrant children in the 1950s; Lloyd Barbee of the NAACP organized protests in support of integrated schools and the teaching of black history in the 1960s; and Marian McEvilly and Howard Fuller contested--in different ways--the politics of implementing desegregation in the 1970s, paving the way for the 1990s private school voucher movement. Dougherty concludes by contrasting three interpretations of the progress made in the fifty years since *Brown*, showing how historical perspective can shed light on contemporary debates over race and education reform.



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