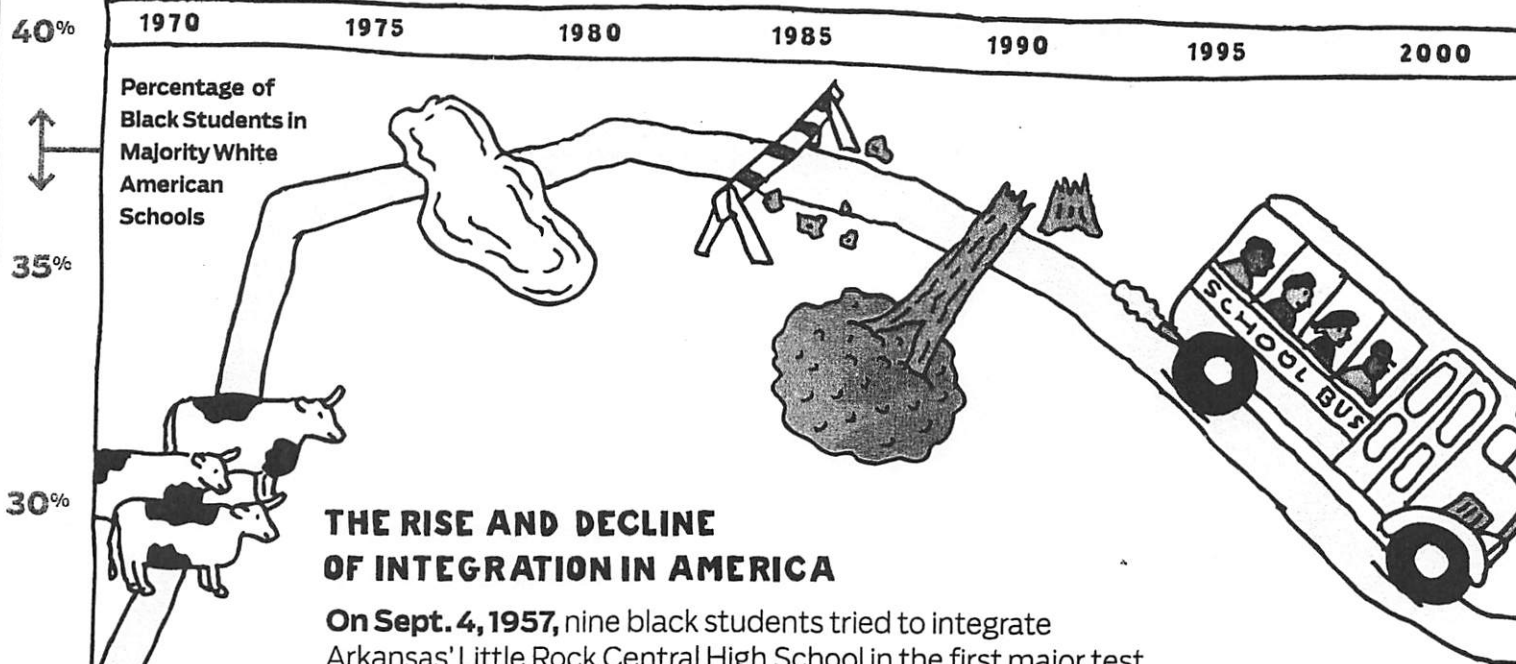


50 YEARS AFTER LITTLE ROCK

by Mike Klesius

Power of 50



THE RISE AND DECLINE OF INTEGRATION IN AMERICA

On Sept. 4, 1957, nine black students tried to integrate Arkansas' Little Rock Central High School in the first major test of the U.S. Supreme Court's segregation-busting decision three years earlier in *Brown v. Board of Education*. After Gov. Orval Faubus denied the students entry, President Eisenhower sent federal troops to make sure they reached their classrooms.

In the years since, Little Rock Central, like schools across much of the nation, integrated—then began to re-segregate.

SOURCES: Harvard University Civil Rights Project; National Center for Education Statistics; Little Rock School District; U.S. Census Bureau; "The Silent Epidemic: Perspectives on High School Dropouts," Civic Enterprises,

TODAY

Little Rock Central has a black majority, in large part because of the declining percentage of the district's white population.

	White	Black	Other
1957-58	99.6	0.4	n/a
2006-07	42	53	5

GOOD NEWS

The percentage of Americans age 25 and older with a high school diploma is much higher than it was 50 years ago, and the disparity among races is narrowing.*

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pac. Isl.	Native Amer.
1950	36.4	13.7	n/a	40.8	12.8
2005	86.6	79.9	59.5	85.5	76.3

BAD NEWS

The nation's dropout rate as estimated by the percentage of school freshmen who graduate on time, is high.

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian
25	25	50	50	25