

## VISUAL 35.1

### JIM CROW LAWS

#### ORIGIN

The name *Jim Crow* derived from a stereotyped African American character in a song and dance act presented by Thomas D. Rice, a popular entertainer of the 1830s. The name *Jim* subsequently came into use as a term for African Americans — one slightly less insulting than other terms in widespread use at the time — and by extension it was applied to new laws requiring racial segregation.

Jim Crow laws were adopted by many southern states in the late 1880s. They required separation of races in the use of public (and many private) facilities. Jim Crow laws also applied to elections; state poll taxes and literacy tests, for example, reduced the number of blacks who could vote.

#### THE SCOPE OF THE JIM CROW LAWS

Jim Crow laws were applied from cradle to grave. They required racial segregation in many areas of public and private services, including the following.

|                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| hospitals        | restaurants    |
| schools          | lunch counters |
| public parks     | theaters       |
| railroad cars    | buses          |
| public buildings | hotels         |
| prisons          | funeral homes  |
| restrooms        | cemeteries     |

## VISUAL 35.2

**DIFFERENT OUTCOMES FOR HOMER PLESSY AND ROSA PARKS**

In 1892, Homer Plessy, an African American, was refused a seat in a first-class railroad car even though he had paid for a first-class ticket. He challenged the segregation laws that permitted the railroad to deny him a first-class seat, and he pursued his challenge all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. But he lost his case. The Supreme Court ruled against him in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), holding that “separate but equal” accommodations for blacks and whites did not violate the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment to the Constitution.

In 1955, Rosa Parks, an African American riding on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, was told to give up her seat to a white passenger. She challenged the segregation laws underlying this incident, and she won.

What explains the change between 1896 and 1955? Why was it possible to challenge Jim Crow laws successfully in 1955?

## VISUAL 35.3

### GUIDE TO ECONOMIC REASONING

1. People choose.
2. People's choices involve costs.
3. People respond to incentives in predictable ways.
4. People create economic systems that influence individual choices and incentives.
5. People gain when they trade voluntarily.
6. People's choices have consequences that lie in the future.