



Root and Branch: Charles Hamilton Houston, Thurgood Marshall, and the Struggle to End Segregation

Rawn James Jr.

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Although widely viewed as the beginning of the legal struggle to end segregation, the U.S. Supreme Court's decision *Brown v. Board of Education* was in fact the culmination of decades of legal challenges led by a band of lawyers intent on dismantling segregation one statute at a time. *Root and Branch* is the compelling story of the fiercely committed lawyers that constructed the legal foundation for what we now call the civil rights movement.

Charles Hamilton Houston laid the groundwork, reinventing the law school at Howard University (where he taught a young, brash Thurgood Marshall) and becoming special counsel to the NAACP. Later Houston and Marshall traveled through the hostile South, looking for cases with which to dismantle America's long-systematized racism, often at great personal risk. The abstemious, buttoned-down Houston and the folksy, easygoing Marshall made an unlikely pair-but their accomplishments in bringing down Jim Crow made an unforgettable impact on U.S. legal history.

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