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The Costs of *Brown*: Black Teachers and School Integration

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Beginning with Vanessa Siddle Walker's 1996 history of a high school in Caswell County, North Carolina, a stream of studies have documented African American schools that were forced to close or lost their identities

when desegregation engulfed the South. The dominant tone of those works is elegiac; far from celebrating the departure of segregated schools, they lament their loss. Once stigmatized as symbols of Jim Crow and engines of educational failure, the black schools of the era before *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) are now portrayed as proud institutions that provided black communities with cohesion and leadership. Their teachers, it is argued, inspired and motivated generations of African American children. Virtually absent from this literature is the central assertion of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People's (NAACP) brief in *Brown*—which was accepted by the Supreme...

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