

## **"The Black table is Still there"**

This article by Lawrence Otis Graham explores his personal story of navigating racial segregation in a white junior high school. He reflects on his choices and the evolving understanding of race relations he developed through his experiences.

The cafeteria's segregated "black table" symbolized the broader racial boundaries in the school. The author initially avoided it, fearing it would jeopardize his white friendships.

Over time, his initial belief that black students' self-segregation fueled white bias was challenged by his own encounters with white discomfort and prejudice. Examples include his white friend's exclusionary bar request and the white families pulling their children from the pool.

The author grapples with the desire for acceptance from white peers and the discomfort with the inherent inequality of the segregated environment. This internal conflict fuels his evolving perspective on racial dynamics.

Returning to the school 14 years later, the author discovers the "black table" remains, suggesting the enduring presence of segregation despite his personal journey and efforts towards integration.