



# Why Busing Failed: Race, Media, and the National Resistance to School Desegregation (American Crossroads)

*Matthew F. Delmont*

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In the decades after the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision, busing to achieve school desegregation became one of the nation's most controversial civil rights issues. *Why Busing Failed* is the first book to examine the pitched battles over busing on a national scale, focusing on cities such as Boston, Chicago, New York, and Pontiac, Michigan. This groundbreaking book shows how school officials, politicians, the courts, and the media gave precedence to the desires of white parents who opposed school desegregation over the civil rights of black students.

This broad and incisive history of busing features a cast of characters that includes national political figures such as then-president Richard Nixon, Chicago mayor Richard J. Daley, and antibusing advocate Louise Day Hicks, as well as some lesser-known activists on both sides of the issue—Boston civil rights leaders Ruth Batson and Ellen Jackson, who opposed segregated schools, and Pontiac housewife and antibusing activist Irene McCabe, black conservative Clay Smothers, and Florida governor Claude Kirk, all supporters of school segregation. *Why Busing Failed* shows how antibusing parents and politicians ultimately succeeded in preventing full public school desegregation.

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