



Pauli Murray

(1910 - 1985)

Pauli Murray was a staunch advocate for the rights of women and people of color and fought tirelessly for civil rights. As a poet, writer, activist, organizer, legal theorist, and priest, Murray was directly involved in, and helped articulate, the intellectual foundations of two of the most important social justice movements of the 20th century. While a law student at Howard University, Murray wrote a paper articulating the argument that eventually formed the basis for the *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1954) decision that declared “separate but equal” in public education unconstitutional. Murray also created the term “Jane Crow” to describe the discrimination based on gender and on race that Murray and other women of color faced in their lives. In 1966, Murray was one of the 12 founders of the National Organization for Women (NOW). Murray is regarded as one of the most important social justice advocates of the 20th century.

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