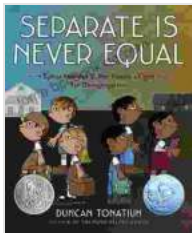


# Sylvia Mendez and Her Family Fight for Desegregation | Jane Addams Award

Sylvia Mendez was born in Santa Ana, California, in 1936. Her parents were Mexican immigrants, and she grew up in a segregated community. In 1945, Mendez and her family sued the Westminster School District because they were not allowed to attend the all-white schools in their neighborhood. The case went all the way to the Supreme Court, and in 1947, the Court ruled in favor of the Mendez family. This decision helped to end segregation in schools across the country.



## Separate Is Never Equal: Sylvia Mendez and Her Family's Fight for Desegregation (Jane Addams Award Book (Awards)) by Duncan Tonatiuh

★★★★☆ 4.9 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 11558 KB

Screen Reader: Supported

Print length : 40 pages

Lending : Enabled



Mendez's story is an inspiring example of the power of one family to make a difference. Her fight for desegregation helped to create a more just and equitable society for all Americans.

## The Mendez Family

Sylvia Mendez was the daughter of Gonzalo and Felicitas Mendez. Gonzalo Mendez was a Mexican immigrant who worked as a farmer. Felicitas Mendez was a Mexican American who worked as a teacher. The Mendez family lived in Westminster, California, a segregated community. The Mendez children were not allowed to attend the all-white schools in their neighborhood. Instead, they had to attend the all-Mexican schools, which were overcrowded and underfunded.

In 1945, the Mendez family decided to challenge the segregation of the Westminster School District. They filed a lawsuit, *Mendez v. Westminster*, which argued that the school district's segregation policy violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The case went all the way to the Supreme Court, and in 1947, the Court ruled in favor of the Mendez family. The Court held that the school district's segregation policy was unconstitutional because it denied Mexican American children equal access to education.

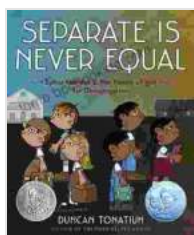
### **The Jane Addams Award**

The Jane Addams Award is given annually to an individual or organization that has made a significant contribution to the cause of social justice. The award is named after Jane Addams, a social reformer who founded the Hull House settlement in Chicago. Addams was a tireless advocate for the rights of immigrants, women, and children. She was also a strong supporter of the desegregation of schools.

In 1987, Sylvia Mendez was awarded the Jane Addams Award for her work in the fight for desegregation. Mendez was recognized for her courage and determination in challenging the segregation of the Westminster School

District. Her work helped to create a more just and equitable society for all Americans.

Sylvia Mendez was a courageous woman who fought for what she believed in. Her work helped to end segregation in schools across the country. She is an inspiration to us all, and her story reminds us that one person can make a difference.



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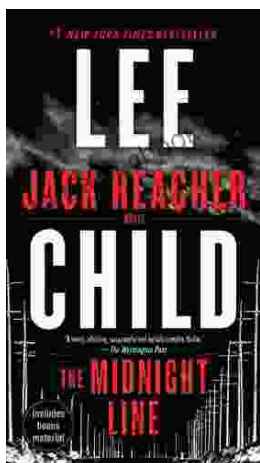
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