

Chapter Summary and Discussion Questions – colorandcharacter.org

Chapter 6: Resegregation 2000-2005

Focus: The end of busing and the rise of resegregated schools

Shows how the return to "neighborhood" schools sparked widespread resegregation, particularly in higher-poverty neighborhoods around the center city and in newly built, high-end suburbs at the edges of the county. Elements of school "choice," most notably magnet schools, accelerated this process.

Describes the effects of resegregation on schools such as West Charlotte, which was left with a high-poverty population of often-transient students as well as high levels of teacher turnover. Explores the fraying social fabric and the rise of the drug trade in the neighborhoods around the school, and the efforts of teachers, families and students to overcome the challenges such developments created.

Describes the way that West Charlotte students – many of whom did succeed in school – contended with the increasingly harsh judgments directed at resegregated schools such as West Charlotte, in part because of a new emphasis on school rankings based on standardized tests, and in part because a resurgence of negative racial stereotypes focused on inner-city African Americans.

Follows West Charlotte's links to the *Leandro* case, which called on the state of North Carolina to increase funding for struggling schools. In 2005, *Leandro* judge Howard Manning called what was happening at Charlotte's highest-poverty high schools "academic genocide."

Themes to Explore

How did increased "choice" affect struggling schools?

What were some of the factors that created challenges for staff and students at a resegregated West Charlotte?

How did West Charlotte students contend with the resurgence of negative racial stereotypes?

Connections

Where in your town do you live? What factors did you consider when choosing where to live? Where does your neighborhood fit into your town's housing patterns? How has your neighborhood and its relationship to other neighborhoods changed in recent decades?

Have you seen changes in the way various groups of people are portrayed in popular culture during your lifetime? Have these changes been positive or negative? What factors do you think drove those changes?

Have you experienced racial stereotyping? How have you and your family/peers/community dealt with that stereotyping?