

## Arthur Griffin discusses desegregation

### Arthur Griffin Discusses Desegregation

Arthur Griffin is an African-American man who attended segregated schools in the 1950s and 1960s. He graduated from Second Ward High School, an African-American high school in Charlotte, North Carolina which closed in 1969. He later became involved in school politics. In this oral history interview, which took place in May 1999, he discusses desegregation in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

**Audio**

**File:**

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Griffin, Arthur. By Pamela Grundy. *Documenting the American South: Oral Histories of the American South*. Interview length 01:33:14. May, 7, 1999. [https://docsouth.unc.edu/sohp/playback.html?base\\_file=K-0168&duration=01...](https://docsouth.unc.edu/sohp/playback.html?base_file=K-0168&duration=01...) <sup>[1]</sup>

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**Transcript:**

#### Audio Transcript

Desegregation opens up a whole vista of knowledge and opportunity that's not always on a piece of paper, but it's in the interaction with others that you broaden your knowledge base. And by broadening your knowledge base, you broaden your opportunities. African-American kids now hear about occupations and jobs and careers that they wouldn't ordinarily hear about if you're segregated. And likewise for whites.

I mean, desegregation is good for white kids, to understand about others that are different, about African Americans, who are a large minority group in America. Likewise Hispanics. And I don't know about the future because I don't study all this stuff, but I do read a little bit, and I'm told that America's browning. That the demographics will change. If you want your white kid to be successful, if you want your white kid to be a corporate president, who's going to work for your white kid? Going to be a minority. Even from the selfish perspective, you know, of wanting to be a Wall Street wizard and be the President of the United States. Who's going to be Vice President? Who's going to be in the Cabinet? Who's going to be the employees in the middle-management of government? It's going to be minorities. And a minority, maybe, I hope and pray, will be President one day.

But I'm saying to you, if we're going to get along in America, looking prospectively, then it makes sense to be in a diverse

setting, because we're moving so quickly to our gated communities in the suburbs, and our churches aren't - where else? Unless you look at the purpose of education differently. If you look at the purpose of education as being one where you prepare youngsters for the future, then we see the future. This is a part of our obligation, is to prepare youngsters. If their future's going to be diverse, where else do you prepare youngsters?

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