The Changing Challenges of School Segregation and Desegregation

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Whither school desegregation? Charter schools, common core standards, teacher evaluations and performance pay based on student growth in assessments, preschool education—the list of educational reforms grows longer each year; school desegregation seems to have been lost in the shuffle. Two new books address the current and past state of school segregation and desegregation, one painting a hopeful picture of the past and the other a pessimistic picture of where we stand today.

Gadsden, *Between North and South*

*Between North and South* is a detailed, comprehensive historical case study of school segregation and desegregation in Delaware from the 1930s to the late 1970s. Author Brett Gadsden, associate professor of Black Studies at Emory University, has completed an exhaustive research effort utilizing secondary sources from newspaper articles, court decisions and briefs, articles and books, meeting minutes, and various manuscript collections from organizations such as the NAACP, public archives, and the papers of key players in the struggle. Gadsden shows how the political, legal, sociological, historical, and other forces shaped the movement of Delaware’s public schools from Jim Crow segregation to the most desegregated state in the nation.

Why study Delaware, the nation’s second smallest state, one with under a million persons even today? In reality there are many excellent reasons. First, Delaware was one of the *Brown v. Board* cases, indeed the only one where the court had ruled in favor of the black plaintiffs. Second, Delaware is a microcosm of the nation with its Southern-like two counties (Kent and Sussex) and northern, urbanized and suburbanized New Castle County. Third, in the 1970s Delaware became the first state to face a federal interdistrict, metropolitan federal court order to desegregate its schools in the Wilmington metropolitan area. As a result, the state’s level of school desegregation became an exemplar for the country with Delaware becoming one of the most racially desegregated states in the nation.

The Introduction lays out the themes of the book as discussed below. Chapter 1 details the desegregation of Delaware’s state university (University of Delaware) and historically black college (then Delaware State College; now Delaware State University) in the context of U.S. Supreme Court decisions before *Brown*. Chapter 2 describes the two Delaware cases which were incorporated into the *Brown v Board*
decisions. Chapter 3 details the resistance to the Court’s desegregation order, especially in Southern Delaware, and provides the detailed story of strong resistance and the organization of the National Association for the Advancement of White People and a rabble rouser named Bryant Bowles in the Milford School district in 1954. This effort did not conform to the more moderate “Delaware way” and failed. Chapter 4 details the implementation of desegregation in Delaware schools and districts. Chapter 5 describes the historical and legal basis of the Wilmington metropolitan remedy. Chapter 6 focuses on Senator Biden’s attempt to be a civil rights advocate while opposing busing and how this influenced federal legislation. The short Epilogue summarizes the impact of the metropolitan plan and white response to the plan resulting in the declaring of the system, then four school districts covering city and suburbs, as unitary. Finally Gadsden discusses how the Neighborhood Schools Act limited busing.

Gadsden’s main theme is that sectionalism, the difference between South and North, has been exaggerated. Delaware analysis shows how when “northern” and “border” whites faced a desegregation order based on busing, they, like their southern counterparts, resisted. Their resistance was not framed on an explicit racist basis, rather it was built around arguments that the law should be color blind, but it still was opposition and resistance. The legal difference between de facto and de jure segregation which kept desegregation orders to mostly southern and border state, Gadsden argues, melted away in the Delaware case as the plaintiffs showed that de facto segregation was not by chance or individual decisions but rather by housing discrimination ultimately linked to segregated neighborhoods and schools.

Gadsden sees the irony in blacks winning the court battles only to have majority white institutions responsible for implementing remedies. For example, after the Wilmington School Board and the ACLU were victorious in the court’s declaring the Wilmington schools segregated and calling for a metropolitan remedy across district lines, the Court assigned the task of designing and implementing a remedy to a white-dominated school board. Indeed, the title of his dissertation on which this book is based was “Victory Without Triumph,” a phrase which well describes the feelings of many black leaders after the sausage machine of politics had designed the remedy. Gadsden captures this irony in his introduction summarizing his book by stating, “This project explores…the possibilities and limits of the liberal consensus around civil rights in the post World War II era (p. 3).”
Readers might ask several questions about this book. Given several previous analyses of the Delaware situation, what does Gadsden add? For one, his work is far more than a factual account of what happened in Delaware. He does an expert job of weaving in the national forces—legal, demographic, political, social—that intertwined with the Delaware case. U.S. Supreme Court decisions such as *Sipuel* and *Sweatt*, which declared the lack of university professional programs separate but unequal and thus unconstitutional, laid the basis for challenges to the segregation of the University of Delaware and Delaware State College. The NAACP case against the University was the first to attack segregation at the undergraduate level in the nation. The *Milliken* decision served as the backdrop for the decision to allow a metropolitan remedy in Delaware. U.S. Senate legislative action influenced by Senator Biden was based on political issues in diminutive Delaware.

Similarly Gadsden places the case in historical context of the changing litigation strategy of the NAACP legal leaders and the U.S. Supreme Court rulings defining dual systems, appropriate remedies, and unitary systems and the end of court-imposed remedies.

Previous works on Delaware have also focused on more limited time frames. Kluger’s (1976) focus was the origins of the Delaware Court of Chancery cases in the 1950s, ultimately consolidated under *Brown*. My book (Raffel, 1980) examined the decade of the 1970s and the origins of metropolitan desegregation in New Castle County. Wolters’ (1984) conservative analysis concentrated on what happened after *Brown* and after the 1978 desegregation of the metropolitan area. Ware (2004) provides a brief summary of the decades long Delaware struggle in the national context. On many dimensions, Gadsden’s book digs deeper. For example, Gadsden delves more deeply into the effect of the court’s decisions on Delaware State College. The book reports testimony from Kenneth Clark and tells many stories which formed the basis of key suits in the Delaware story.

Who would be most interested in this book? Policy analysts, historians, political scientists, and education researchers would find this volume of interest as would anyone interested in a fascinating story of historical change. If anyone still believes that education is an apolitical topic, this book will cure them of that illusion. This book is not written for practitioners, however. There is no attempt to inform readers of how to effect educational change or achieve school desegregation.

There are several poignant and instructive vignettes in this book, some told before and some not. Building on Kluger (1976), Gadsden describes the situation facing Sarah Bulah as she and her husband had to drive their daughter to a Negro school despite a bus taking students to a white school passing by their house each morning and their daughter’s school daily. Why couldn’t the bus pick up their daughter and drop her off at her school? As she wrote the governor, “Please look into the matter for me. I seem to be getting the run around’ (p. 65).
couldn’t identify with that? While Delaware’s constitution called for segregated schools, it did not require segregated buses. These parents just wanted a bus ride for their daughter but Louis Redding, Delaware’s storied Black lawyer and the hero of the piece, told her “I won’t help you to get on a Jim Crow bus!” The rest is history!

Gadsden describes the travails that lawyer (and later judge) Leonard Williams had to face in circa 1970 in buying a house in an upscale white neighborhood of Wilmington. Facing real estate and home seller reluctance to sell to a Negro, Williams had a friend check out a house and then posed in scruff clothes as an electrician’s helper to see the house. This story provides a human face to the housing discrimination argument the plaintiffs made about the causes of school segregation which lay not in de facto but rather in de jure reasons.

There are several important subthemes jumping out of Gadsden’s work. A major subtheme is that the origins of school desegregation in Delaware, and presumably elsewhere, lay not in the desire of black parents to have their children go to school with whites but rather to have their children have the resources that were afforded white students. As the Delaware Court of Chancery ruled and Gadsden evidences throughout his book, the Delaware schools were separate but definitely not equal. Black parents like Sarah Bulah sought access to white educational institutions so their children could study the same subjects, have acceptable school facilities, and, more generally, have equal opportunity. They did not begin with a romanticized view of black and white children sitting side by side but rather a desire to have the same opportunities for their children as that white students enjoyed. This is an excellent rejoinder to the critics of desegregation who do not understand the premise of school desegregation and criticize its adherents by falsifying their goals. In other words, Gadsden elucidates the shift for many blacks from equalization to desegregation.

Given the above point, perhaps it is not surprising that Gadsden specifies many points at which blacks in Delaware and nationally had second thoughts about desegregation. While Gadsden shows how the original push for equal educational opportunities for blacks morphed into a battle for school desegregation, he also illustrates the ambivalence of blacks to school desegregation. The reasons for this ambivalence changed somewhat over time but the basis extends back to the conflict over black control versus integration. The dismantling of the dual system began with a one-way process, freedom of choice plans, which would put black teachers, administrators, and leaders in jeopardy as the majority white system became the unitary system for schooling. In Delaware, for example, the burdens of desegregation plans meant the closing of black schools and the busing of black students for many more years than for whites. Indeed, Gadsden even reports that Sarah Bulah was not a hero to many of her Negro neighbors.
One subtheme which I inferred was the significant role played by individuals in these events. Judge Collins Seitz and Lawyer Louis Redding remained heroes in Gadsden’s book but Senator Joe Biden and Attorney General Albert Young do not. Redding led the legal effort in Delaware to desegregate the institutions of higher and elementary and secondary education, not accepting efforts for equalization but demanding that desegregation be the goal. Seitz, accepting Plessy v Ferguson, visited Delaware schools to see with his own eyes that Delaware’s school system for Negroes was far from equal to the system for whites, and he ruled accordingly. Young, although generally regarded as a hero today in the state, is shown as an attorney general who did try to forestall the desegregation of Delaware’s schools although he did stop the threat of violence in the Milford conflict. Gadsden’s chapter on the attempt by young Senator Biden to be a civil rights advocate while responding to anti-busing sentiments is difficult for this Biden fan to read. But regardless of one’s views, the fact that individual actors had a major influence on this historical conflict cannot be denied.

Generally this book is well produced. While there are only a few pictures in the book, the visualizations add to the story. For example, p. 118 shows a crowded anti-desegregation rally in southern Delaware in 1954 and page 148 shows a black girl sitting in a formerly white classroom in 1959. The footnotes are superb and the list of sources helpful but I have to admit I miss a straight bibliography. On the negative side, I bumped into several typos.

A few years ago Biden biographer Jules Witcover (2010) interviewed me while trying to “understand why a civil rights liberal like Joe Biden opposed busing.” As Gadsden points out, Biden was representing his constituents who opposed busing and the federal court order forcing their children to cross city-suburban boundaries. The metropolitan order was implemented, the schools almost totally desegregated, but after the court declared the evolved four districts unitary, the Neighborhood Schools Act passed by the legislature led to today’s resegregation of many schools in the city. Hopefully Gadsden will be expanding his Epilogue into a sequel!

Frankenberg and Orfield: The Resegregation of Suburban Schools

While Gadsden focuses on the past, Frankenberg and Orfield describe the present in dazzling (and dizzying) detail. No longer is the major issue de jure segregation of blacks and whites in American cities. Today many U.S. suburbs are facing major demographic changes—a rapid increase in Latino, black, and even Asian population along with a shrinking white population.

This country is going through a demographic transformation that is already having major consequences for the world’s first suburban society. Most Americans live in suburbs, and the focus of racial and economic transformation is now clearly in suburban areas…Our major conclusion, based on evidence from a multi-year study of suburban districts and communities, is that suburban school districts are feeling
unsupported and unable to formulate a coherent response to the metropolitan demographic change of which their district is one relatively small part. Ignoring the implications of racial change will be destructive to many suburban communities, and doing nothing does not work in the face of resegregation threats (p. 1).

In sum, these are not your father’s suburbs. “Dated models drawn from biracial cities a half century ago don’t tell us enough about how today’s multiracial suburbs can enhance our understanding of race and educational opportunity (p. 2).” After all a majority of students in our schools in the largest metropolitan areas are minority students and “there are more low-income people living in suburbs than cities (p. 2).” Declining white birthrates, immigration, and housing and zoning policies have had a major impact on suburban demography and the students served by suburban schools. “Many of the concerns once confined to urban schools are increasingly found in suburban districts (p. 3)” including (but not limited to) increasing student diversity of race and income, teaching staffs not prepared to educate this diverse student body, limited resources to address these issues, and political institutions unable to address these changes. Indeed, the editors even ask if suburbia is still a useful concept (p. 17).

In many ways this volume is the polar opposite of the Gadsden volume. Gadsden studied one state and provides the history of segregation and desegregation in that state. Resegregation includes seven case studies of suburban school districts across states throughout the nation and paints a picture of the current status of segregation and demography rather than the past. Gadsden based his work on historical documents while Resegregation is based on statistics and interviews. Gadsden’s book builds on his dissertation while the Orfield and Frankenberg book is the first major publication derived from a Spencer Foundation study of the impact of suburban change on the education of poor and minority students.

Chapter 1 of Resegregation provides the statistical evidence that many American suburbs now face massive demographic change and are coping with segregation or resegregation. “By 2000, for example, a
majority of Latinos lived in the suburbs and the Latino population there has increased 71 percent in the 1990s alone (p. 11).” Suburban student demographics are now quite similar to student populations across the nation. The percentage of whites is on a downward trend while blacks, Asians, and Latinos, now the second largest demographic group to whites, have increased. Chapter 2 (authored by Frankenberg) concludes, “Suburban areas no longer fit the notion of homogeneous affluent havens (p. 27)”, and then uses the NCES Common Core of Data to categorize suburban school districts in the 25 largest metropolitan areas. Using cluster analysis, Frankenberg places the 2,364 districts into six clusters, which indicate the variety of suburbs in the nation (N’s in parentheses):

- Exclusive enclaves (703)
- Countywide districts (13)
- Stable, mixed income (1,102)
- Inner-ring transitioning (75)
- Satellite cities (305)
- Developing immigration meccas (142)

Frankenberg notes that while some districts are untouched by these demographic changes, others are profoundly changed. Thus there is great variation across suburbia. Chapters 3-9 are the case studies of individual suburban school districts, completed by a variety of authors, mostly assistant professors of educational leadership and policy. Here are brief synopses of the district analyses:

San Antonio suburb-This district shaped a “separate but equal” response to demographic change, in part because of political constraints, focused on increasing the cultural awareness of administrators (in a program entitled “Difficult Dialogues”) and instructional interventions but allowing choice measures, which increased segregation.

Orange County suburb-While we may have an image of a white upper class community, Orange County has faced major demographic change but because of financial, political, and legal constraints (e.g., California Propositions 1 and 209), the studied district’s schools remained segregated by race.

Waltham (MA)-This working class white district faced increased diversity from Latinos and immigrants from Southeast Asia as its white population declined but educators did not feel they had the skills or resources to address the needs of this changing population. A patchwork of policies and programs was the result.

Minneapolis suburb-Again while we may have an image of Minneapolis as a white enclave, many of its suburban districts faced major demographic change. In Osseo, leaders faced strong neighborhood school
forces in a district divided by race and segregated by housing policies, but the researchers conclude desegregation through magnet schools has not been effective and the district acted too late in the process.

Florida countywide district-This large county district, facing major demographic change, was constrained by federal and state policies favoring choice and requiring accountability as well as middle and upper-middle class opposition to changing school attendance lines necessitated by the state requirement to reduce class size. The district’s focus on lowering the achievement gap and its voluntary desegregation plan based on choice have not forestalled school segregation.

Suburban Atlanta “outer edge” school district-In this fast growing district the black population has a higher median education than the white, but there seems to be little push for desegregation from them or the district’s leadership. Rather, the district is working on trying to diversify its staff and train them for cultural diversity while the business and community leadership are working together to link economic and educational success.

Oak Park (Illinois)-This Chicago suburb was the only district to tackle segregation head on but no with positive results. Indeed the chapter title, like all the other cases using a quotation from the interviews to try to capture the theme of the case, is “‘The Oak Park Way’ isn’t enough.”

Orfield’s Chapter 10 is the prescriptive concluding chapter, based on the notion, “The suburbs will never be the same again…. The day of the solid white middle-class suburb is history (p. 215).” Orfield’s premise is that stable integration produces “better educational, social, and economic futures for families and communities (p. 216).” To achieve this, Orfield calls for “a broader vision and more effective leadership (p. 217).” This leadership should include school and local officials addressing segregation problems before the public is even aware of them. Leaders should address the issue of segregation directly; “Nothing should be covered up, where it will fester (p. 227).” To do this, school leaders must partner with those shaping the private housing market including municipal housing, planning, and civil rights officials. State laws no longer require or monitor segregation. Orfield implies that this should change. Professional training and aid targeted to help address resegregation is needed. In addition, the staffs of public agencies and school districts need to be
more diverse. The assumption of too many is that separate but equal can work given the right resources and programs (e.g. accountability) but history has not shown this to be true. Staff training in race relations needs to be research-based. Federal policies and resources are no successfully addressing alternatives to address segregation; magnet school funding is too limited and does not include free transportation. The federal Departments of Education, Housing, and Justice need to formulate policies and programs to help. Regional collaborations would be helpful to address problems exacerbated by the balkanization of metropolitan areas. Civil rights organizations need to shift their focus from cities to the changing suburbs and metropolitan area, and vigorous civil rights enforcement is needed. Universities and foundations need to offer training to the groups noted above, and researchers need to conduct research relevant for describing and addressing these issues. Regional cooperative arrangements and countywide school districts offer the greatest hope for plans that will work. States can reorganize school districts to overcome the fragmentation found in too many metropolitan areas. In sum,

What we need for a comprehensive attack is a different system of school districts and student attendance boundaries, a more regional operation of school choice and magnet efforts with a goal of stable diversity and equity. The goal should be supported by planners, housing officials, and local governments and embraced by the key operators in the private housing market...Ideally in the long run we should move toward consolidated government and school districts that embrace much larger parts of metropolitan areas.... (p. 235)

A major theme of the volume is that suburbs have ignored the threat of segregation, have reacted late in the process, or have limited their response to narrow educational programs such as staff training and a more responsive curriculum for the new students. With the one exception of Oak Park, the suburbs analyzed in this book have not tackled segregation and demographic pressures head on. The editors are certainly aware of the reasons why. Federal and state constraints dictated by courts and legislatures have restricted responses to “color blind” actions; U.S. Supreme Court decisions have established the framework for recognizing districts as “unitary” and authorizing the dissolving of desegregation plans; state race-based tools to foster desegregation have been outlawed; and civil rights enforcement has dissipated. Political limitations, which in part inspired these constraints, make addressing these issues difficult if not impossible. Less emphasized by the editors, except in the last chapter when Orfield states, “Almost all educators are former teachers; they are not typically trained in demography, housing, race relations, or the dynamics of neighborhood change (p. 219)”, is that educators are prepared to be educators rather than demographic, political, or psychological leaders. To a man with a hammer and trained as a carpenter, everything looks like a nail.
Another major theme of this book is the linkage between housing and schools in causing segregation in schools (see Varady and Raffel). The editors state, “...as scholars increasingly realize, segregated residential patterns—and their impacts on school composition—are not a ‘natural’ phenomenon (p. 5).” Rather, segregation results from the actions of governments and discriminatory practices in the real estate industry. The editors point out that there is “usually little or no coordination between municipal, educational, and civil rights officials (p. 4).” The editors chide educators who believe that a color-blind strategy, focused on standards, will address racial change. Several of the cases show how housing decisions, not controlled or usually even influenced by school districts, set the pattern of segregation in the schools. (This is a major point Gadsden discusses as well, how de jure segregation in the North and Border states is a function of housing discrimination). The analysis of Oak Park’s attempt to respond to the private housing market is especially interesting in this context (pp. 189-192).

A further theme that emerges from several of these cases is the withering role of state governments in addressing the problem of segregation—specifically the rollback of school desegregation requirements, restrictions on bilingual education, and counterproductive impacts of accountability. California’s Proposition 1, passed in 1979, greatly restricted mandatory busing ordered by state courts, and Proposition 209 prohibited school districts from using race and ethnicity in drawing school attendance areas. Minnesota enforced mandatory desegregation until 1999 and then replaced it with a voluntary school choice approach which, according to the case’s authors, has not worked. Massachusetts and California passed propositions restricting bilingual education. The constraints accountability programs place on school leaders is a subtheme running throughout the cases. Desegregating a white school, for example, can make it more difficult to meet accountability standards across many subgroups so educational leaders and parents are reluctant to support school assignment change.

What about the limitations of this volume? Frankenberg and Orfield have not avoided the usual difficulties of case study research. While the cases are all clearly written and cover the basics, there are differences in style and issues discussed. Some communities are identified and some are not, but it doesn’t take a Googler long to figure out what districts or counties are “masked.” (For example, just Google the population of the outer edge Atlanta suburb to determine the county.) The methodology is standard for case studies with semi-structured interviews, relevant census and other data reported, and secondary sources used as available. There is a question about the consistency of the analysis across cases. One example of this problem is the analysis of Osseo which focuses on the role of city officials. The reader is left to wonder if that is because city officials played a larger role in Osseo, the chapter’s authors were more focused on their role, or because the authors
were more responsive to the case study protocol than those studying other districts.

The major contribution of this volume is that the editors have described a significant, underemphasized challenge in American education today. As the editors note, “Since the early 1970s, there have been no major new civil rights or urban policy initiatives (p. 7)…we have systematically turned a blind eye to the pervasive, underlying inequities in our metropolitan areas for almost half a century (p. 7).” The editors are quite cognizant of the challenges demographic change brings to what were once homogeneously white suburban districts and the need to educate students who do not fit the traditional suburban stereotype. The cases illustrate the difficult challenges facing educational leaders. This volume has put a statistical face on my own personal experience as I have seen the demographic change and resulting conflicts in metropolitan Wilmington, Delaware and the suburban school districts where my grandchildren attend public school (i.e., the Washington, DC; NYC; and Philadelphia suburbs). I remember telling the State Board president in Delaware decades ago that the majority of black students were now in the suburbs, not the city of Wilmington, and the surprised look on his face. The challenge of school desegregation has radically changed and this volume documents and describes this well.

While this volume documents the difficulties districts face in addressing the challenges of segregation, this is not a book for those seeking a statistical analysis of how the increasing segregation in suburbs has impacted student achievement. The focus is on racial change, patterns of district response (or non-response), and potential future actions to address these issues. Nor is *Resegregation* a book which provides evidence that desegregation works in increasing the achievement of minority and/or students in poverty. In this vein, I found the Oak Park case to be the most interesting and the most troubling. This district has made major efforts to avoid segregation and actually has taken many of the steps Orfield advocates. Yet, the racial achievement gaps remain. The question must be: to what extent can the schools be the agency of equality in today’s American society? What schools and districts have regularly closed these gaps? In other words, outside forces still have a major impact on schools and their success, racial gaps remain wide, and accountability is a growing force. Schools respond with educational programs, professional development, and where possible, desegregated staffs but the results seem to hardly change at all.

The editors spend little space on making the case that school desegregation is a more successful strategy than the reforms now in vogue. In the concluding chapter Orfield does argue that since the Reagan presidency halted the enforcement of desegregation efforts, the white-minority gap has not narrowed as it had when desegregation was in favor. Orfield notes, “…there is a deep and persisting inequality in the achievement of students by race, and very little progress over the past three years is closing these gaps (p. 1).” Those seeking a micro rather
than macro argument for school desegregation will not find it in this book. Rather, the editors assume desegregation is good and lament that suburban districts cannot maintain or achieve it.

The major limitation of this volume, however, is not the diagnosis of the problem but the remedies Orfield proposes in the final chapter. The problem with his remedies is that in today’s political climate they seem so unlikely to be realized. As one district administrator put it, “We recognize that when we’re talking about changing attendance boundaries, we’re messing with people’s two most important assets—we’re messing with their house and their kids. It’s going to be an emotional topic (p. 57).”

Yes, public officials should take into account the impact of their housing, zoning, and transportation decisions on school demographics but where has that happened? What are the many hurdles that must be overcome to cooperate and coordinate? Yes, teachers and educational leaders should be more aware of the political aspects of their environment but the separation of politics from the care and feeding of educators remains an obstacle (Raffel, 2007). As the editors point out, educational policy in the last several decades “has overwhelmingly addressed standards and accountability, focusing on teachers and classrooms, not on social change outside of schools… (p. 3).”

In the concluding chapter, Orfield has developed the following to do list, some explicit and some implicit, for readers and leaders:

- Change the composition and decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court.
- Change the policies emanating from the U.S. Congress and federal incentives and aid for school and housing segregation.
- Change state policies on accountability, desegregation, bilingual education, and reorganize school districts in metropolitan areas.
- Change the preparation and training of educators as well as public officials and real estate agents and others in the private housing market.
- Change the agenda of researchers at universities.
- Change the structure of local government.
- Change public opinion in the nation.

To say that this agenda is ambitious is the understatement of the century!

In summary, the editors state “The objective of this book is to challenge educational leaders to respond effectively to the trend of resegregation in the suburbs and to look at the experience of communities across the country (p. 19).” I am not sure the book has or could achieve this objective completely. Educational leaders certainly already feel challenged, as this book lays out in great detail. This book might help educational leaders to feel better that others are facing the same challenges. But there may be little in this book about how to respond effectively. Indeed, Orfield points out that these challenges must be addressed primarily by those outside individual suburban districts and require policy
solutions outside the limited realm of educators. More than educational solutions are required — housing, financial, economic — and responses are required beyond the boundaries of individual school districts, i.e. metropolitan if not state responses. I would think that state and federal policy makers need to read this book although I am afraid that political realities will limit their addressing the important issues raised herein.

When we bring the two volumes together, we see why school segregation is so difficult to address and desegregated schools so difficult to achieve and sustain. Educators are not prepared to respond to these issues. Major impacts on school segregation take place outside of the schools, especially in housing, zoning, economic development, and other areas. Constraints on state and local governments have reduced the options available to leaders. And these constraints are based on a wide swath of the public wanting to ignore the problem or at least be sheltered from the impact of any solution or response. While we are now much more informed about changing dynamics of school segregation and desegregation, it is difficult to be optimistic after reading these books and hearing that Gadsden’s original title was “Victory without Triumph” and Frankenberg and Orfield’s subtitle is “A Hidden Crisis in American Education.”

References


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