

# Was Football the Right Play in Desegregation?



<https://noplaybook.albemarlehistory.org/roland-and-ronald-woodfolk>

## Supporting Questions

1. What can we learn about the desegregation of Charlottesville schools from football?
  2. How do oral interviews give insight into local history?
3. What were the limitations to full desegregation of Charlottesville Schools?

7th-11th Grade Inquiry Based Lesson

Compelling Question?	
Standards and Content	
Staging the Compelling Question	Was football the right play in desegregation?

Supporting Question 1	Supporting Question 2	Supporting Question 3
What were the challenges to desegregation in Charlottesville? How are these reflected through athletics?	How do oral interviews give insight into local history?	What were the limitations to full desegregation of Charlottesville schools?
<b>Formative Performance Task</b>	<b>Formative Performance Task</b>	<b>Formative Performance Task</b>
Watching videos, responding to questions	Watching videos, responding to questions	Study the timeline and website.
<b>Featured Sources</b>	<b>Featured Sources</b>	<b>Featured Sources</b>
<p><b>Source A:</b> Article from Encyclopedia Virginia on Massive Resistance <a href="https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/massive-resistance/">https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/massive-resistance/</a></p> <p><b>Source B:</b> Article from Encyclopedia Virginia on desegregation <a href="https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/desegregation-in-public-schools/">https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/desegregation-in-public-schools/</a></p> <p><b>Source C:</b> Linked videos on page</p>	<p><b>Source A: Wikipedia Article on Burley High School</b> <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burley_High_School_(Charlottesville,_Virginia)">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burley_High_School_(Charlottesville,_Virginia)</a></p> <p><b>Source B: Links on pages</b></p>	<p><b>Source A: links on pages</b></p>

<b>Summative Performance Task</b>	<b>ARGUMENT:</b> Was football the right play in desegregation? Construct an argument (e.g., detailed outline, poster, essay) that evaluates the need to study, remember, and/or celebrate this expedition using specific claims and relevant evidence from sources while acknowledging competing views.
	<b>EXTENSION.</b> Conduct your own oral interview: Choose a peer or someone who has lived in Charlottesville and have them discuss their own high school experience. Compare and contrast this to the oral interviews you watched.
<b>Taking Informed Action</b>	<p><b>UNDERSTAND</b></p> <p><b>ASSESS:</b> Was football more harmful or helpful in the desegregation of Charlottesville schools?</p> <p><b>ACT</b></p>

\*Featured sources are suggested, and links are provided. It may be that these links are broken, and we apologize in advance for the inconvenience.

## Overview

### Inquiry Description

This inquiry leads students through an investigation of local history through primary sources, oral histories, and interaction with multiple types of archives.

This inquiry highlights the following additional standards:

- **Analysis**
- **Observation**
- **Contextualization**

It is important to note that this inquiry requires prerequisite knowledge of sensitive discussion surrounding racial issues, the importance of the segregated history here in Charlottesville.

Note: This inquiry is expected to take one or two 50-minute class periods. The inquiry time frame could expand if teachers think their students need additional instructional experiences (e.g., supporting questions, formative performance tasks, featured sources, writing). Teachers are encouraged to adapt the inquiry to meet the needs and interests of their students. This inquiry lends itself to differentiation and modeling of historical thinking skills while assisting students in reading the variety of sources.

## Supporting Question 1

The first supporting question-What were the challenges to desegregation in Charlottesville? How are these reflected through athletics?

The formative task is watching/ listening to portions of these oral interviews, while analyzing through the corresponding questions.

The following sources were selected to create personal connections to local history by hearing firsthand accounts of attending Charlottesville schools amid the Civil Rights Movement.

Athletics was a powerful tool used in the fight for integration. We can see through the following videos and documents the impact football in Charlottesville- more specifically at Lane High School- had on the students. Especially during its transition from the all-white Lane High School, to the integrated Charlottesville High School that still exists today.

### SOURCE A: Encyclopedia Virginia on Massive Resistance

<https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/massive-resistance/>

Use this article to contextualize the importance of desegregation and its impact on communities like Charlottesville.

This context provides insight and background to the interviews conducted by the ACHS.

- What was Massive Resistance?

### SOURCE B: Encyclopedia Virginia on Desegregation in Public Schools

<https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/desegregation-in-public-schools/>

Using the following link, students can research and learn this history and help to better contextualize the oral histories provided here. Read and analyze the information provided in this encyclopedia entry.

### SOURCE(S) C: Primary Sources from No Playbook

**Source 1:** Garwin DeBerry's oral interview audio clip

- <https://noplaybook.albemarlehistory.org/garwin-deberry/why-cant-i-play>
  - How was football used to prevent desegregation?
  - What does this tell you about the environment in Charlottesville City Schools at this time?

**Source 2:** Letters from his mother Ms. Hattie DeBerry to superintendent Fendall Ellis requesting the transfer of her son from Lane High School to the all-black high school, Burley High School:

Find the letters at this link:

<https://noplaybook.albemarlehistory.org/sites/default/files/2023-01/Letters%20between%20Hattie%20DeBerry%20and%20Fendall%20Ellis%201%2C%20UVA%20Special%20Collections%2C%20Charlottesville%20City%20School%20Board.JPG>

**Source 3:** Newspaper clipping from The Daily Progress

Find the clipping at: <https://noplaybook.albemarlehistory.org/tommy-theodose>

*(viewing on the website is easier than the attached image)*

C2—THE DAILY PROGRESS, Charlottesville, Virginia

# Lane Era Has Come to an End

"Yet leaving here a name, I trust, that will not perish in the dust."

—Robert Southey

"Who hath not owned, with rapture-smitten fame, the power of grace, the magic of a name."

—Thomas Campbell

"That many-remembered name."

—Laurence Binyon

By GARY CRAMER  
Assistant Sports Editor

Without any melodramatics, one of the richest high school athletic traditions in the state of Virginia quietly came to an end this past week.

Even though the transition will not be complete until the opening of the new Charlottesville High School in September, the last athletic teams to represent Lane High School are now history.

Although the same coaches and some of the same athletes will start summer football practice in August, it will be for a new school with a new name. Perhaps the full impact will not be felt until that first home football game when the familiar sound of "L-A-N-E, yeaaa Lane" will be absent.

For almost 50 years the high school in this city has been called "Lane" and the reputation of the school's athletic teams, especially football, has become entrenched around the state. It is a reputation that was not born overnight and it is one that will not die quickly either.

"It's going to take a little time to adjust," said Willie Barnett, athletic director at Lane for the past 15 years. "I've been sending out all our schedules for next year using the name 'Charlottesville' instead of 'Lane', but a lot of the stuff I get back from other schools still refers to us as 'Lane'."

"Athletics has raised the name of this school to where it is well recognized throughout the state," Barnett added.

"Sorrow" was the word assistant football and head baseball coach Joe Bingler used to describe the change. "One

can't help but feel somewhat depressed," he said. "We have become so used to what we have done. It's the end of an era."

Lane's reputation was most solidly established from 1962-67 when the Black Knight football teams under Tommy Theodore and Bingler compiled a 53-game undefeated streak, the longest in the nation at the time.

"It was a once in a lifetime achievement," said Theodore. "The whole association within the community was tremendous. It put us on the map which is why I hate to see the name change."

"We have won some games just because of the pride and tradition associated with the name 'Lane'," said Bingler. "Some people know the name Lane but don't know it's from Charlottesville. Next year we won't have any tradition."

The name "Lane High School" came into existence in 1926. Before that the school was called Charlottesville High School and won two state basketball championships in 1915 and 1924.

The first state title under the name Lane came in 1929 when the football team, coached by Jimmy Leitch and led by captain Reginald Wood, won the state Class B title. Harry Martin, who later became a coach and athletic director at the school was a member of that team.

Lane also placed second in the state track meet that year. The team was led by James Sewart and Floyd Johnson and coached by Pop Lanningan, the famed University of Virginia coach for whom UVA's new tartan track, Lanningan Field, is named.

In 1931, Leitch's football team missed the state championship by percentage points under the rating system, a fate that befell several of Theodore's teams in the 60's, too.

Leitch also coached track that year as Lane, paced by Lindsay Blanton, Newman Harris, Dan Yates, Archie Hahn, Jr., and Donald Fitzhugh, won the state title.

Hahn was the first of a number of outstanding boxers to come out of Lane. He went on to UVA where he was undefeated and three times Southern Conference bantam-weight champ.

In 1932, the state title did not elude Leitch and the Lane football team. Paced by captains "Black Billy" Jones and Whitten Morse, Lane went 9-0 and took the class B title.

Leitch's last year as coach was in 1933. His five-year record was 35-13-2.

In 1934, Lane moved up to Class A competition and promptly won the state football title led by Carl and Robert Deane and Claude Haggard. The team was coached by John Dial.

Carl Deane went on to Duke University after graduation from Lane where he quarterbacked Wallace Wade's 1938 undefeated and unscored upon Blue Devils' team that lost in the final seconds in the Rose Bowl.

In the late 1930's and into the 40's, the only three sports at Lane were football, basketball, and boxing. This area became a hotbed for boxers as evidenced by Lane's outstanding record in the ring.

The 1939 Lane boxing team was runnerup in the South Atlantic Prep Tournament. Harry Lowe and present athletic director Willie Barnett were individual champs. Barnett went on to captain Virginia's team three times and win the Eastern Intercollegiate championship.

The 1940 team went undefeated and won the South Atlantic Prep Tournament. The 1941 team duplicated the feat.

In 1941 Lane had probably its greatest tennis player ever in Harold Burrows. "Prince Hal" starred at UVA and played on the United States' number one Davis Cup doubles team with Straight Clark.

In 1943 the boxing team once again won the South Atlantic Prep title, led by Len "Bo" Coiner, Cecil Barnett and Hilton Eidelman. Coiner went onto become an Eastern Intercollegiate champ at UVA.

From 1949 to 1962 Theodore starred for Lane athletic teams. Now one of the top high school football coaches to be found, Theodore earned 15 of a possible 16 letters while an athlete at Lane. Bingler was also a standout at this time.

In 1962 Lane picked up its nickname, the "Black Knights"

See LANE, Page C3



- How do you view instances of tradition in this case? Helpful or harmful in preserving a community's legacy?
- Is the changing of sports team names (including those of present day) important/ relevant in the fight for equality?

## Supporting Question 2

The second supporting question is: How do these oral interviews give insight into local history? How do these firsthand accounts shape our understanding of local history?

The formative task is to listen to these and interpret these audio clips.

The scaffolds and other materials may be used to support students as they work with sources.

The following sources were selected to enhance the students' understanding of local history by getting to work with firsthand accounts.

### SOURCE A: Wikipedia Article on Burley High School

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burley\\_High\\_School\\_\(Charlottesville,\\_Virginia\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burley_High_School_(Charlottesville,_Virginia))

Use this article to learn about the history of Burley High School and provide context to the interviews and oral histories that can be observed below.

### SOURCE B: Oral Histories

**Source 1:** Tommy Theodose's oral interview:

- <https://noplaybook.albemarlehistory.org/tommy-theodose/bottom-line-was-you-wanted-win-football-games-and-far-integration-and-so-were>
  - How do you believe this impacted Tommy's iconic legacy in Charlottesville?

**Source 2:** Ronald and Roland Woodfolk's Oral interview

- <https://noplaybook.albemarlehistory.org/roland-and-ronald-woodfolk>  
minutes: 36:32- 39:12
  - How do they credit athletics as a means to overcome racial tensions at the time?
  - Do you believe football positively benefited the community at the time? Why or why not?

**Source 3:** James Bryant's Oral Interview

<https://noplaybook.albemarlehistory.org/james-bryant/she-was-field-cheerleading-and-they-were-just-calling-her-n-word>

- Do these stories surprise you in the greater context of the Civil Rights Movement?

### Supporting Question 3

The final supporting question is: What were the limitations to full desegregation of Charlottesville schools? The formative task is to look at the No Playbook website (linked below), and have students be able to look at the resources themselves.

The following sources were selected to allow students to directly engage with the website themselves.

**Source 1:** the “No Playbook” Website

<https://noplaybook.albemarlehistory.org/>

Have students explore the website and interact with the oral histories, and other available resources.

**Source 2:** Timeline from the “No Playbook” Website

<https://noplaybook.albemarlehistory.org/timeline>

Have students explore/interact the timeline

- This timeline was compiled by the ACHS researchers/ historians when conducting this project
  - o What does this timeline add to the understanding of the desegregation movement?
  - o How or why does this differ from the more widely used historical concept of “integration?”  
What could be factors of this?
  - o What are some of the limitations to the full desegregation of Charlottesville public schools that can be observed from this timeline?



## Summative Performance Task

At this point in the inquiry, students have examined numerous oral interviews, and primary sources. Students should be expected to demonstrate the breadth of their understanding and their abilities to use evidence from multiple sources to support their claims.

In this task, students will study the questions asked during the oral interviews to understand the context that shaped the interviews conducted by the ACHS and create an argument that answers:

Was football (and other extracurricular school activities) more harmful or helpful in the desegregation of Charlottesville schools?

The purpose of this task is for students to grasp the importance of primary sources, and connection to firsthand experiences, especially when trying to write a history that is careful not to exclude any valuable voices.

In understanding the framework that shaped these interviews, they provide additional context in the argument of whether football (and athletics in general) was more harmful or helpful in the fight for desegregation.

To extend their arguments, have students compare and contrast the experience of the actual interviews with the template developed by the ACHS (provided below), note why certain aspects may have been excluded and the importance of adapting oral interviews to fit with those being interviewed. Students could practice conducting their own oral interviews with peers if permitted.

Using the following link, learn how to conduct your own oral interviews:

<https://siarchives.si.edu/history/how-do-oral-history>

## Sign Release Form

- **Date of Birth:**
- **Specific address growing up and now : Please describe your neighborhood? Church?, etc?**
- **How did you spend your free time?**
- **Do you have siblings? If so, how many? Birth order?**
- **Parents – and parents occupations**
- **Do you remember any talk at home about Brown v. Board of Ed and the coming of integration?**
- **What schools did you attend growing up?**
  - ▽ **What was that school like? Teachers? People who supported you?**
  - ▽ **Were those schools integrated or segregated?**
- **When did you get involved with sports? Or, if not sports: What activities were you involved in your neighborhood? In your church? In your school?**
  - ▽ **In your neighborhood?**
  - ▽ **What sports did you play? Where?**
  - ▽ **At school?**
- **Did sports become a means to overcome race divisions? In what way?**
- **What were Relations between and among students? Coaches?**
- **How were you treated by teachers? By fellow students?**
- **Were you involved with other activities in school? Outside of school?**
- **Do you remember the principal and other administrators? What impact, if any, did he have on race relations?**
- **Do you remember any specific incidents at your school that had to do with race relations?**
- **Did you have any preparation for schooling in an integrated environment?**
- **What was Charlottesville like for a person of color during your years here? Or, what was Charlottesville/Albemarle like in terms of interactions between racial groups?**
- **In your opinion, What role did/does sports play in racial integration? Did the camaraderie on teams and excitement in the stands have a carry over effect? Why/why not?**
- **Are there other activities that have the same impact as sports? What about other cooperative activities – theater, music (chorus/band/orchestra), etc.? [This question depends on what the individual interviewee has been involved in.]**
- **What did you do after you left HS**