

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Civilities and Civil Rights by William Chafe

1. Find several examples in the book that illustrate the tension between social control and social change. What examples can you point to now, in the 21st century, surrounding education that highlight the same tension?
2. How are white supremacy (Cornel West reading), paternalism (Freire reading), and different educational experiences (Anyon reading) connected to what Wm. Chafe discusses in his book?
3. How did the features of the progressive mystique lead to the evolution of the Pearsall Plan?
 - a. How would you defend the Pearsall Plan?
 - b. How would you critique the Pearsall Plan?
4. What forms of resistance did Black Americans exert in Greensboro, according to Chafe, that are lessons for us regarding non-violent action (Sharp) approaches to the challenge of educating for a democracy?
5. How does the discourse of civility operate to discourage protest action?
6. Chafe sees communication as a vehicle for self-realization and fulfillment in the community when people are afforded authentic and genuinely equal opportunities to participate. How would you comment on the condition of public communication surrounding education?
7. In 1954, there was the promise of new opportunity (Brown v. Board of Education), as there was in the 60s era of protest action and again in 2008 with Barack Obama's candidacy and election to U.S. President. What can we learn from these hopeful moments? What happens when our hopes falter and people retreat from political processes?