

Being Bused

1974: my parents were nineteen and twenty, growing up a few towns away from Southie. This wasn't generations ago: this was my PARENT'S generation. This wasn't the South: this was where I spent many summer days exploring Castle Island or enjoying a breakfast on the corner of K street or watching the St. Patrick's Day Parade. I noticed as a child they liked my mother and I just a touch more than others, us being red heads and all, but I did not realize that the city I loved so much had such a troubled past. Well that is until I was 14 in my high school English class reading the autobiography, "All Souls," about a man who had lost all his siblings to murder in this area. He touched briefly on racism and the busing riots, all of which I had no idea about. What was worse is that it took until now to realize the time scale. My parents were my age! How can something that seems SO wrong have happened so short a time ago? How does my generation not realize that this was such a recent problem? Is it because of where I was raised? A city with lots of cultures mixed together, relatively happily. Was it because of my family? A family that is not perfect by any means but is very accepting. Was it my core group of friends that covered almost every race? What caused my ignorant bliss?

More importantly, what caused Phyllis Ellison's strength? Was it also just a little bit of ignorant bliss, simply wanting to be with her friends? It had to be more. No one would put himself or herself through such turbulence without an important reason. From learning about this movement, I want to learn more about the dynamics of people and how to excite our generation around an important issue. I may even be able to translate this to my career. As an environmental engineer, I could really use some insight as to where the breaking point will be where our generation finally will stand up for the

environment. It is a little different since the environment does not have its own voice to preach with, but that is why I find it even more important to speak for it and protect its natural rights.

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