

**Educ 300 Reading Guide for
Constance Curry, *Silver Rights***

& David Cecelski, *Along Freedom Road*

book is based on author's assistance to (and follow-up interviews with) Mae Bertha and Matthew Carter and their children, who were first African Americans to desegregate all-white schools in Sunflower County, Mississippi, in mid-1960s

book is based on author's study of African Americans in Hyde County, North Carolina, who protested a school desegregation plan that would close two historically black schools in their rural coastal area in the late 1960s

Historical actors:

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Mae Bertha & Matthew Carter

Black residents of Hyde County

the Carter children

White residents of Hyde County

White residents of Sunflower County

HEW – US Department of Health,
Education, and Welfare

White allies of the Carter family

(federal education agency in 1960s)

Comparative discussion questions:

Describe the status of black schooling in each book. What educational opportunities existed before the 1954 *Brown* decision -- and after?

What kind of school desegregation -- if any -- was implemented in each community? By whom?

How did different historical actors perceive the "freedom of choice" desegregation plans?

How did African Americans in each book define their struggle for better education? What forms of power did they exercise in these struggles? Did they achieve their goals – or not?

Source: Jack Dougherty, Trinity College, 2003
<http://www.trincoll.edu/depts/educ/dougherty.htm>