

Is Boston Racist?
Does the city (and its people) deserve this reputation?

I. Three different claims about Boston being racist: slides 1-14

	Basic Message	Your thoughts/reaction What do you agree or disagree with in the example?
Michael Che		
Kyrie Irving		
Lebron James		
The Daily Show		

II. The Boston Busing Crisis: Slides 24-33 (some slides are skipped)

- A. In the 1970s Boston’s schools were still segregated.
- B. In an effort to desegregate the school system, a judge ordered Boston to start a forced busing program that would redistribute children in schools across the city.
- C. Citizens in the city (mostly white) pushed back - sometimes violently - against the program.
 - 1. What is one example of white residents’ resistance?
- D. Answer the questions using Figure 18. Context: In 2019, there were 139 public schools in Boston.
 - 1. How many schools enrolled fewer than 40% students of color? _____
 - 2. How many schools enrolled at least 80% students of color? _____
 - 3. Have Boston schools become more or less segregated over the last 50 years? _____
 - 4. Based on what you see in the graph, did busing in Boston help bring about a positive or negative change in the schools’ racial makeup?

III. The City Today: slides 35-45 (some slides are skipped)

A.

What are the racial demographics of the Boston Metro Area?	What are the racial demographics of the city?
White: _____	White: _____
Hispanic: _____	Hispanic: _____
African American or Black: _____	African American or Black: _____
Asian: _____	Asian: _____

- B. How does this compare to other major cities in the US?
- C. What are the answers to these figures concerning race in Boston?
 - 1. Number of black politicians elected to statewide office in the last 50 years? _____
 - 2. Percentage of corporate board members who are black? _____
 - 3. Median net worth of white residents is \$_____
 - 4. Median net worth of black residents is \$_____

5. Between 1980 and 2015, what happened to the % of black students at some elite city colleges?
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C. What is the definition of **De Facto Segregation** and what is one piece of evidence that it exists in Boston?

D. Take a look at slides 45-50 and reflect on what you see.

- Slide 46 shows posters from popular and award winning movies about Boston.
- Slide 47 shows images of Boston's most famous and "beloved" athletes.
- Slides 48-51 are photos of fans attending Sox, Bruins, Celtics and Patriots games.
 - a. How might the images in these slides help fuel the stereotype that Boston is racist and/or unwelcoming to people and athletes of color?

- b. Look at the pictures of the fans at each team's game. Do you see any differences between the Sox/Bruins and the Celtics/Patriots? Why do you think that might be the case?

VII. Crime and Policing

- A. Violent crime in Boston has continued to fall, and there haven't been any major cases of police brutality or federal investigations for systematic civil rights violations by BPD
- B. But two past examples do linger in the city's history
 - 1. Charles Stewart:

 - 2. Henry Louis Gates
- C. On the surface these two cases are not connected and years apart. They are also singular examples of crimes or police actions from a city that has to deal with lots of crime (as all cities do). However, they both made national and international headlines.
 - 1. Why do they stand out and add to the city's reputation?