Chapter Summary: Apartheid History

* Trevor’s childhood reflects the extreme racism and prejudice that characterized life in South Africa under the apartheid.
* Apartheid was a system of control with laws meant to keep black people from rising up against white rule.
  + Lastly for more than forty years from 1948-1991.
* Principles were inspired by the racist ideals of Hitler
  + Concept originated with the National Party, who gained support from white nationalists and promoted the idea that white people are racially superior (which is a notion both morally wrong and factually incorrect).
* The National Party came to power in 1948’s election on a platform for segregation.
* Even though black people vastly outnumbered white people in South Africa, the apartheid was the solution to separating the groups of people.
* Four different racial groups: black, white, colored and Asian
  + Blacks made up the majority and were further broken down into tribes
    - Zulu, Xhosa, Tswana, Sotho and more
* Under apartheid, they treated different racial groups unjustly.
  + White South Africans were superior, followed by the others.
  + Blacks were considered most inferior, and often the target of violence and other atrocities.
* Trevor explained it well: apartheid was an impossible system for police to enforce with complete accuracy because it relied heavily on profiling people based on appearance.
  + It did not represent the complexities of how people identified themselves.
    - For example, Japanese people were considered white, but Chinese people were considered nonwhite even though they both came from Asia.
* In practice, it is similar to the end of the Civil War in the United States, as seen by the blatant acts of inhumanity and mistreatment of racial groups.
  + Slavery ended and blacks were granted citizenship and voting rights, but the whites were still mad
    - Continued to do block power through poll taxes, literacy tests and putting in Grandfather clauses
* During the Civil Rights Movement, blacks were forced to use different bathrooms, schools, buses, public facilities and more.
  + These were known as “Jim Crow” laws
* One main difference apartheid and Jim Crow laws was that apartheid were federal laws and segregation was legal. The US also were driven by the concept “separate but equal”, but the apartheid said that “all races were not equal”.
  + Apartheid assigned different levels of rights to its racial groups, making them separate and unequal.
* Significant Laws:
  + Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act: illegal for interracial marriage
  + Immorality Act: illegal for interracial romantic relationships
    - Trevor was “born a crime” under this law
  + Population Registration Act: forced all South Africans to identify with one of three racial groups: black, white or colored
    - Asian and Indian came later
  + Group Areas Act: racial groups be physically separated and people would live in regions according to race
    - Soweto is an example of a township, which is a newly designated neighborhood where white cities house black laborers.
  + Bantu Education Act: black people would receive a lesser education than whites, limited to mostly low-level and job-related skills
    - Instead of history and science, students learned how to build roads or grow crops
  + Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act: black populations to relocate from their homes to “homelands”, which were removed from white regions
    - They often did not supply basic amenities like running water or electricity
* In short, blacks lived in oppression in South Africa and were treated unfairly. Opposition intensified over time.
* The African National Congress (ANC) began to rise, which was a predominantly black political group and liberation movement that fought for equal rights of all races in South Africa.
  + Biggest initiatives: Programme of Action and Defiance Campaign
    - It encouraged nonwhite people to purposely break the law in order to overcrowd the jails to raise awareness for the resistance effort.
* In the late 1950s, protestors began to shift more aggressive shows of opposition and tensions grew.
  + Sharpeville massacre in 1960: police opened fire at the crowd and killed sixty-nine people. The uproar marked a turning point
* Nelson Mandla was one of the most important political leaders, who was a member of the ANC and negotiated the end of the apartheid.
  + As things began to get violent, he founded a militant group and was later arrested for his resistance efforts. He spent 27 years in prison.
* The Sharpeville massacre ignited protests all over the world, too. It made it clear that the apartheid attacked basic human rights and demanded global action. Other nations realized the magnitude of their oppression.
  + The United Nations (UN) pressured the South African government to get rid of the apartheid. When they tried to expel South Africa from the organization, they were not successful due to the lack of support of all countries. They also tried to penalize them economically.
    - It was a complicated situation.
* Individual countries took action to protest by boycotting goods, culture and sports. They were excluded from the Olympic games in 1964 and did not compete again until 1992.
* President Frederik Wlliem de Klerk realized that the system was unsustainable in 1989 and began to bring it to an end.
  + Nelson Mandela was released from prison and together, they put an end to dismantle the apartheid.
* Trevor was five years old when Nelson Mandela was released, but the violence and the political unrest continued throughout his childhood.
  + The shift from apartheid to democracy was not simple and nothing really changed.
* In 1994, people of all color could vote. Nelson Mandela was elected as the first black president in South Africa.
  + He spent a lot of time addressing the lingering effects of apartheid
    - The Truth and Reconciliation Commision: assess crimes of aparthied and grant justice to victims of human rights abuse
* Today, quality of life has improved greatly for nonwhites. Communities are integrated and people don’t face the same deprivation in terms of housing, education and jobs.
  + However, racial inequalities and prejudicial attitudes continue to exist. Levels of poverty tend to correlate with race and there remains limited social mobility for nonwhite people.
  + The South African government continues to work towards unity and equal opportunity.