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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
2006 Volume I: Photographing America: A Cultural History, 1840-1970

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## **African American History: A Photographic Record**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 06.01.08  
by Jacqueline Porter-Clinton

I am a Teacher of the Deaf at East Rock School working with seventh and eighth grades for resource for one period a day and with them in the regular education setting for the remainder of the day. My schedule is flexible to co-teach in different classes. This unit is being designed for an eighth grade social studies class.

Black history is either mentioned slightly or else completely omitted from some textbooks. In partial compensation, Black history has been assigned the month of February for celebration. During this time most students are exposed to the same few prominent figures and their accomplishments, for example Harriet Tubman's Underground Railroad, and Rosa Parks' Bus Boycott. The most talked about moment is Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech. In the past I have chosen to read a novel about a famous black activist. This approach proved to be long and boring for the students.

This unit will teach the students to establish a purpose for viewing to gain better comprehension and to supplement their understanding of the written text. In this unit I will use a timeline of photographs to travel throughout history and highlight the African American experience -- not as isolated incidents but, as they occurred, as part of United States history.

(Recommended for Social Studies, grades 5-8.)

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