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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1981 Volume III: Human Sexuality and Human Society

Sex Roles, Courting and Marriage Among Puerto Rican Teenagers

Guide for Curriculum Unit 81.03.03

by D. Jill Savitt

The unit is designed to inform and sensitize both students and teachers to the influence the Puerto Rican culture and society has on our adolescents' developing sexuality. The prose centers around Puerto Rico's traditional values and moral system in terms of dating, courting, sexuality, and marriage. The unit hopes to explain just why our Puerto Rican teenage girls feel so compelled to marry or get pregnant at a very young age. By discussing the "cult of virginity," the good girl/bad girl syndrome and the assigned male and female roles, the unit points to various reasons for a teenage girl's helplessness in the face of her sexuality. The unit also addresses male superiority and machismo. After much discussion and explanation of the powerful forces at play in these adolescents' lives, a series of resources is offered to ease the situation. Several adolescent novels which center around teenage sexuality and pregnancy have been reviewed. Other book titles are also provided, along with available films that deal with sex, sexuality and teens. Activities are provided, to be used with a questionnaire especially geared at the Puerto Rican's beliefs about sex, sex roles and courting. The basic idea of the unit is to inform, tactfully, and to make suggestions at how to deal with our Puerto Rican teens in the classroom. The unit can very well be used in conjunction with the other units contained within this volume, especially the one that deals with Hispanic teens.

(Recommended for 7th-12th grade Sex Education, Sexism Issues, Social Studies and English.)

Key Words

Bilingualism Sex Education Spanish English Ethnicity Puerto Rican Sexuality Culture Rico Human Teenagers

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