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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1996 Volume I: Multiculturalism and the Law

Multicultural Issues and the Law: Gender and Race Based Schooling

Guide for Curriculum Unit 96.01.06
by Sequella H. Coleman

Multicultural Issues and the Law: Gender and Race Based Schooling deals with several cases where gender based and race based schooling are the issues. The legal basis of the pros and cons of these issues is the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment. The lesson plans are geared toward the sixth grade curriculum but can be adapted and taught from fifth through twelfth grades.

The unit begins with the Prudence Crandall case of a woman running an all black girls school in Canterbury, Connecticut; it then moves to the Citadel and VMI cases and ends with the Detroit and Milwaukee cases of schools geared toward black males.

The lessons have students trying to act out situations, discussing their feelings and then debating one of the cases. The major point they should learn from the case reviews is that regulations that classify by gender are not subject to the same scrutiny under equal protection as is a regulation that classifies on the basis of race or national origin.

(Recommended for U.S. History-Bill of Rights, grades 6-8, 9-12; Law Course-Bill of Rights, grades 10-12)

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