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

Affirmative Action: Is It Still Necessary

Guide for Curriculum Unit 96.01.13
by Henry A. Rhodes

This curriculum unit is intended for an eighth grade Social Studies class. This unit may also be used in a high school American history course. This unit provides students with the history of affirmative action and how it was established as a result of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The original intent of affirmative action under Title VII was to provide equality of opportunity for minorities and women. My unit discusses how affirmative action evolved from its original intent into a policy where numerical goals and preferential treatment became mainstays of many of the affirmative action programs that exist today. In addition, this unit contains various intellectual and judicial opinions regarding affirmative action. My unit also focuses on some of the major issues affiliated with affirmative action, such as preferential treatment, numerical goals, and quotas. My curriculum unit concludes with an examination of ten major Supreme Court challenges against affirmative action. The cases are as follows: Regents of the University of California (at David) v. Allan Bakke, Fullilove v. Klutznick, Local 28, Sheet Metals Workers Association v. E.E.O.C., Wygant v. Jackson Board of Education, United States v. Paradise, Firefighters Local Union No. 1784 v. Stotts, Johnson v. Transportation Agency Santa Clara County, California, Local No. 93 International Association of Firefighters v. City of Cleveland, United Steelworkers v. Weber, City of Richmond v. J.A. Croson Co.

(Recommended for Social Studies, grade 8; and American History, grades 9-12)

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