

Demo: Civics Alive Foundations and Functions

Unit 3 – Sections 1-7, Pages 123- 141 The United States Constitution - Summary

Overall, this is an informative lesson on the US Constitution. There are, however, some glaring subjective and misleading pieces that should be removed.

In the introduction on page 123, it states:

“On the morning of February 26, 1971, Dwight Lopez headed off to his classes at Central High School in Columbus, Ohio. Things had been tense at school lately. Many students were upset about the school’s cancellation of Black History Week celebrations. Students were also in shock after two African American students had recently been shot off campus. These events would help to bring about a major disturbance at school that day.”

“Like many American cities in the early 1970s, Columbus was experiencing tension. Opposition to the Vietnam War was fueling large antiwar demonstrations. At the same time, racial divisions were high. Despite the legal gains made by the civil rights movement in the 1960s, most African Americans had not experienced significant social or economic progress. In Columbus Public Schools, racial tension was boiling over.”

This is a subjective view of what caused the fight in the cafeteria and not substantiated by facts. According to the court documents and the National School Board Association Council of School Attorneys’ presentation, “Goss v. Lopez, Today: The Evolution of Student Discipline”, the plaintiffs’ complaint did not allege racial disparity or discrimination. A reporter for the New York Times noted the presence of that issue was charged by civil rights organizations claims that white school officials across the nation had been increasingly relying on unjustified suspensions as a discriminatory weapon against black pupils, even though it was not the situation in the Dwight Lopez case.

Page 128:

*“Third Amendment: Quartering of soldiers. Bans quartering of troops in private homes during peacetime. This was a key concern in the 1700s **but has little relevance today.**” This should always be considered relevant.*

Page 129-130: *The Twenty-fourth Amendment banned poll taxes, which had been used to keep African Americans from voting in some states. **Poll taxes have been used since 1381 and targets the poor from voting.***

Page 129-130: *The Equal Rights Amendment was intended to guarantee equal rights for women. It was finally passed in 1972, but did not win ratification in the necessary three-fourths of the states. **The ERA’s central underlying principle is that sex should not determine the legal rights of men or women.***