

Equality Before the Law



As a Young Political Scientist, I will be able to...

- Explain the importance of the Equal Protection Clause in safeguarding individual rights.
- Describe the history of segregation in America.
- Examine how classification by gender relates to discrimination.

Equal Protection & Individual Rights

Did you know? 400 slaves worked on the Capitol & the set up the statue of *Freedom*?

Equal Protection Clause- “No State shall deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.”

This means that states cant give unreasonable distinctions between any person.

The Due Process Clause puts this idea on the Federal Government as well

The background of the slide is a stylized American flag. The top left corner shows the blue field with white stars, while the rest of the slide is filled with the red and white stripes of the flag, rendered in a painterly, slightly blurred style.

Government Regulation

The Government has the power to discriminate human behavior such as murderers or criminals

They cannot discriminate unreasonably. Take Smokers for example...

Rational Basis Test- Court asks if the classification in a law is reasonable to achieve a government purpose (Tax laws)

Strict Scrutiny Test- A State must be able to show that some compelling governmental interest justifies distinctions between groups of people

History of Segregation

Segregation- Separation of one group from another on the basis of race.

Jim Crow Laws- Laws aimed at African Americans before Civil Rights Movement

Plessy V. Ferguson set up the **separate-but-equal doctrine**. People could be separated if utilities were “equal”

This was challenged famously in ***Brown v Board of Education***. This case found that segregation by race in public education to be invalid

The background of the entire slide is a close-up, slightly blurred image of the American flag, showing the stars and stripes in warm, golden-brown and red tones.

Segregation

Integration- The process of desegregation & allowing races to mix in public society

Civil Rights Act of 1964- Act forbid the use of federal funds to State or local activity where segregation is allowed

De Jure Segregation- Segregation by law such as Jim Crow laws

De Facto Segregation- Segregation exists by fact, even with no law (very common today)

Gender & Sexual Orientation

The background of the entire slide is a stylized, painterly representation of the United States flag. It features large, soft-edged stars in the upper left and wavy stripes of red, white, and blue across the rest of the frame. The colors are muted and blended, giving it an artistic, almost abstract feel.

The Constitution speaks on “people” but does not specify gender.

The 19th Amendment said you cannot deny vote “on basis of sex”

The LGBTQ+ community could not marry until 2015 in the *Obergefell v. Hodges* case