

## **Vulnerable Populations and Transformative Law Teaching: A Critical Reader**

By Society of American Law Teachers and Golden Gate University School of Law (2011). 405 pages, ISBN: 9781594609497. \$47

**Subject:** Teaching legal research.

**Useful for:** Useful for those looking to incorporate social issues into classrooms, clinics, externships, study abroad programs, and the law school curriculum in general.

**Format:** Chapters with index.

### **Reviewer's Comments:**

Vulnerable Populations consists of chapters of essays written by presenters at the 2010 “Vulnerable Populations, Economic Realities” teaching conference hosted by Golden Gate University School of Law. It explores exposing law students to the deficiencies in the legal system regarding the disparity of equally representing all races and classes in our society. These essays resonated strongly with me in their significance to the current political climate in the U.S.

Like much of our country on either side of the political divide, I am captured by, and inundated with, the explosive current news on racial and class issues. This book led me to think about the numerous constitutional battles currently in courts throughout the country, and consequentially, the lawyers involved in those cases. Where do these lawyers come from and how did they first become aware of the disparities in the laws and who they protect?

The answers to both questions are simple: they come from law schools across the country and their awareness starts with us. Vulnerable Populations explains the significance of our role in raising student awareness of these issues. It emphasizes the importance of us, as educators, introducing and reinforcing to our students the importance of understanding “We the People” as representing all people, regardless of their race or socioeconomic class. It offers pedagogical strategies for discussing these legal inequalities with our students, and fostering continued interest in these issues throughout their law school experience. Throughout, the theme is bringing to light not only the concept of these inequalities, but also fostering in our students the drive to effect social change.

Both timely and socially significant, Vulnerable Populations explores key legal deficiencies in promoting equality between various populations, and motivates readers to take an active role in bringing law students’ attention to the importance of recognizing these disparities and in taking an active role to change them. This book is a must for anyone seeking to teach their students about the shortcomings of the legal system in protecting all groups of our society equally, and anyone striving to promote student involvement in changing this system both during law school and later in their careers. It also provides several examples of specific assignments that support this mission in various law school courses.

**Reviewed by:** Rena Seidler, Indiana University McKinney School of Law, in 2018.