

**HISTORICAL REPRESENTATION OF RACISM IN MARILYN NELSON AND ELIZABETH
ALEXANDER'S COLLECTION OF POETRY *MISS CRANDALL'S SCHOOL FOR YOUNG
LADIES AND LITTLE MISSES OF COLOR***

TANIMA KUMARI¹ & RAJNI SINGH²

¹Junior Research Fellow, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian School of Mines,
Dhanbad, Jharkhand, India

²Associate Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian School of Mines,
Dhanbad, Jharkhand, India

ABSTRACT

Being a black person was a curse during the 17th to mid of 19th century in the United States; they were not treated as humans rather they were described as 'beasts' and were meant for drudgery. The black men were subjugated to slavery and were oppressed but the black females were triply oppressed. They had to endure the grave problems of race, colour and gender. The paper endeavours to study the character of Miss Crandall who became a legendary figure to the millions of coloured girls who lived with a spark in their eyes to get recognized in the society, to enjoy the status of a human being as was enjoyed by the Whites. At the age of twenty-eight, Prudence Crandall started teaching the coloured girls along with the white girls. The renowned African-American poets Marilyn Nelson and Elizabeth Alexander in their poetry collection, *Miss Crandall's School for Young Ladies & Little Misses of Color* try to portray the difficult circumstances of the coloured girls who were not only denied the literacy but also the least means of adequate human lives. Through various symbols and images in the poems, the two poets have 'voiced the voiceless'. The sensibility of being black female was projected in various forms. It deals with the issues and the problems which the black women have to undergo to exist in society. The paper tries to undertake the study of different phases and facets of their lives with their teacher Miss Crandall who presents the idol picture of a true teacher and human being as well.

KEYWORDS: Black Feminism, Race, Colour, Gender