

Affirming Racial Inequality

The Right's Attack on Affirmative Action

By Jean Hardisty

The following article is an excerpt from *Mobilizing Resentment: Conservative Resurgence from the John Birch Society to the Promise Keepers*, by Jean Hardisty, (Beacon Press, 1999).

To many white people, affirmative action is palatable because it helps white women, as well as men and women of color. The strategy of emphasizing its benefit to white women can therefore be an effective strategy for defending affirmative action. But the political struggle over affirmative action is really about race, not gender. The right attacks affirmative action primarily on the grounds of race, even when the attacker is a person of color.

Although the right masks the racial animus behind its attack on affirmative action, that attack provides an instructive case study of the subtlety and effectiveness of the right's "new" racism. Affirmative action has been high on the right's hit list since the mid-1960s. Its virtual defeat in the policy arena and in the voting booth exemplifies how a well-funded and highly-coordinated political movement has engineered a retreat from the goal of decreasing economic and social inequality and has redefined fairness to apply only to the individual, not to

the group. Similar to its campaign against welfare or its attack on lesbians and gay men, the right incubated the campaign against affirmative action in the 1960s and 1970s, designed its implementation in the 1980s, and brought it to fruition in the 1990s.

When the early architects of affirmative action developed it as a policy to benefit African Americans, who had mounted a strong civil rights movement to demand an end to racial discrimination, the right reacted almost immediately. Later, when other people of color and white women began to benefit from affirmative action, many white people continued to see affirmative action as a program to benefit African Americans. The right often frames the issue to reinforce that perception, perhaps because, in the United States, African Americans are the principal target of white racism, and benefits for Blacks, especially if they are cast as "special" benefits, are politically unpopular among many white voters.

In the 1980s, the first decade of the right's electoral power, its strategists refined the ideological basis for the attack on affirmative action and developed various tactics for rolling it back. During the same decade, Ronald Reagan's appointment of at least half the entire judiciary ensured that the US Supreme Court and the lower courts would abandon their role as a bulwark against reactionary initiatives. In the 1990s, having refined its arguments and softened the terrain of public opinion, the right struck its blow in the legislative arena. The result has been a triumph for the "new racism" and

enormous setbacks for the gains of the civil rights movement.

Affirmative Action as an Extension of the Civil Rights Movement

The right is correct when it claims that affirmative action is a government-imposed extension of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Although affirmative action was not included in the Civil Rights Act, very soon after the Act was passed, the government was compelled to develop it, reflecting the urgent demand for justice from the civil rights movement. Lyndon Johnson, President in 1964, put the power of his office behind a liberal vision of affirmative action. His strategy was to mandate it throughout the executive branch of government, thereby making it government policy.

When the 1964 Civil Rights Act passed, the Johnson Administration relied on the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) which had been created to enforce Title VII, the employment section of the Act. Jobs and promotions would then be based on the principles of meri-

EDITORS' NOTE: This article has 90 footnotes. The longer version of this article with complete footnotes can be found in *Mobilizing Resentment: Conservative Resurgence from the John Birch Society to the Promise Keepers*, by Jean Hardisty, (Beacon Press, 1999). Please call Political Research Associates for more information, (617) 661-9313.

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Commentary

by Loretta J. Williams

We're really excited—Jean Hardisty's book is hot off the press and requests for copies are pouring into the PRA office. *Mobilizing Resentment: Conservative Resurgence from the John Birch Society to the Promise Keepers* is a book that's really going to make a difference: more people will have a way to understand how social meanness has become a defining characteristic of these times.

In clear and engaging language, Jean describes the Right's ongoing attacks on the legacy of the liberation movements over the past three decades. Readers learn the contours and context of the web of networks criss-crossing the movements of the Right. We learn how the "enemy"—"political correctness," "welfare moms" and the like—was collaboratively constructed in ways that those targeted, not economic policy elites, became responsible for all that's bad in life. We learn also where, when and how those on the liberal and progressive left miscalculated the significance of the backlash assaults. You must read the book. (Note the special offer price in this issue.) Order the book now for yourself and significant others. Promote the book at local bookstores and through your networks.

In this issue of *The Public Eye*, we excerpt from Jean Hardisty's analysis of the Right's attacks on affirmative action, a case study of the "new racism." This chapter helps us look at the ingrained distortions and move through the camouflage of "moral" arguments that difference means deficit. In this year of political pageantry, we need Jean's clear-headed guidance through the tight weave of right-wing rhetoric. While the movement is not uniform in its views about race, they do hold in common, spoken in the language of creation, the conviction repeated as a mantra: 'discrimination no longer exists except in rare cases'. The clear message: 'A real American can rise above whatever obstacles he or she might individually face.' And the beat goes on.

The Right has indeed mobilized resentment and offered "McNugget-like" bromides that unfortunately have been ingested by many people today. State by state, initiatives are mounted to roll back affirmative action and other gains from the past four decades of expanding democracy in this country. Privatization in the economy has been matched by privatization of social responsibility: a message of "me and mine."

We have contradictions to face, dear readers, in this year of electioneering, about our own complicity with the direction of US society in this time of predatory capitalism. We must overcome our pessimism about turning things around. I remain convinced that, if we truly believe in the human rights and dignity of all in a pluralist democratic society, we must, and we can turn back the Right's successes. As has been said, we are the children of our pasts and the parents of our future. Let us be about the business of co-creating our future.

In the resiliency of the struggle is our hope.

Loretta J. Williams is President of the Political Research Associates Board of Directors.

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tocracy, with open competition and the “best” person, determined in a non-discriminatory way, winning. In those more optimistic times, civil rights supporters of all races thought that the removal of racial discrimination would allow Black people to “win” their proportionate share of jobs and promotions. Many people were moved by the vision of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., when he called for a society in which people are judged not by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character. It is particularly painful to see the right appropriate King’s words and use them to attack affirmative action.

Right-wing authors seldom note that Dr. King understood that eliminating discrimination would not be an adequate corrective to a history of racist oppression. In his 1964 book, *Why We Can’t Wait*, King wrote:

Whenever this issue of compensatory or preferential treatment for the Negro is raised, some of our friends recoil in horror. The Negro should be granted equality, they agree; but he should ask for nothing more. On the surface, this appears reasonable, but it is not realistic. For it is obvious that if a man is entering the starting line in a race three hundred years after another man, the first would have to perform some impossible feat in order to catch up with his fellow runner.

King was correct. It quickly became clear to civil rights activists and supporters within the Johnson Administration that the 1964 Civil Rights Act alone would not eliminate discriminatory practices in hiring and promotion, and even when it did, Blacks and other people of color would be unable to compete with more-advantaged white applicants because the playing field of preparation and past opportunity was not level. Further measures were necessary, and the Johnson Administration responded with executive orders, Justice Department lawsuits, and Department of Labor regulations. In 1965 Johnson issued Executive Order 11246, which required affirmative

action only from employers holding contracts with the federal government, included sanctions for those who did not, and ultimately created the Office of Federal Contract Compliance (OFCC) within the Labor Department. During this period, the unions practiced exclusionary apprenticeship and membership policies, especially in the building trades. Johnson and the Democratic Party did not confront this discrimination head-on (except for those employers holding federal contracts), since the unions were heavy supporters of the Democratic Party. Nevertheless, the right quickly labeled the Johnson Executive Order “reverse discrimination.”

Ironically, during the Nixon Administration, the OFCC oversaw four “special area programs” or “home town plans” that culminated in the famous “Philadelphia Plan,” which both strengthened and refined affirmative action. The Philadelphia Plan required federally supported projects to establish minimum standards for racial fairness in contract bidding. It defined the correct standard as a percentage of racial minority employees that corresponded to a “target” percentage or “goal.” It thereby established an important new benchmark for federal anti-discrimination policy. Though Nixon was lukewarm on affirmative action, his appointees at the Labor Department supported the Philadelphia Plan. To the Administration, it had the further appeal of being opposed by the unions, many of whom supported the Democrats.

In 1970, the Department of Labor issued guidelines designed to end discrimination against women in jobs paid for with federal funds. In 1972, Congress passed the Equal Opportunity Act and several other measures expanding the scope of anti-discrimination protections for women and people of color, and Nixon signed it into law. In 1973, a milestone Consent Decree was concluded in a joint agreement between AT&T and three government agencies—the EEOC, the Labor Department, and the Justice Department. The Consent Decree created the “AT&T Model Plan,” in which the Bell System agreed to pay damages and

change its employment policies in response to a finding that 95 percent of those employed as low-paying operators or clerical workers were women, and, of higher-paid craft workers, 95 percent were male and only six percent of those were Black. Virtually no white women or African American women or men were in managerial positions. At AT&T, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 had had little impact on patterns of hiring and promotion. The AT&T Model Plan brought the power of the federal enforcement mechanism to bear on employment practices within the private (albeit subsidized and regulated) sector.

The Nixon Administration advanced the cause of affirmative action despite its firm ideological opposition to it. While the steps above represent progress for civil rights groups and women’s groups, a 1972 *New York Times* survey found that the Nixon Administration “has all but abandoned efforts to force federal contractors to hire more blacks, other minority workers, and women.” The survey found that personnel at the Federal Office of Contract Compliance were “demoralized” and were not enforcing the 1969 Philadelphia Plan. Enforcement did not improve until the Carter Administration came to office in 1976 and extended anti-discrimination protections. Its Labor Department developed regulations that set goals and timetables for hiring women on federally-funded construction projects on a trade-by-trade basis.

Affirmative Action and the “New Racism”

Much like members of a family, the different sectors within the electoral right—the New Right, neoconservatives, paleo-conservatives, the Christian Right, and new Republicans—see race differently, often quarreling among themselves and sometimes changing their positions over time. Outside the family are the political neighbors, the far right activists who carry guns and advocate violence against people of color, Jews, abortion providers, and “homosexuals.” Though not welcomed by the electoral right, they do

influence the Republican Party's right wing.

All sectors of the right assert that racism is a thing of the past: specifically, that both legally-sanctioned (*de jure*) discrimination and the informal practices of *de facto* discrimination have been corrected. Right-wing strategists and intellectuals either deny or ignore the existence of institutional racism—the systematic encouragement and toleration of racial inequality in a wide variety of sectors, such as housing, education, and employment.

Throughout the 1980s, press coverage of the New Right did little to expose the right's denial of ongoing racism. The press did cover the racist and anti-Semitic activities and ideologies of the far right, and especially the Identity movement in the West and the farmbelt, the Posse Comitatus in Wisconsin, white supremacist activity in the South, and organizing by the Rev. Sun Myung Moon and neo-fascist Lyndon

LaRouche. But the New Right's leadership distanced itself from these far right activities. The movement intended its very title, *New Right*, to state its abandonment of the far right's racial agenda. Paul Weyrich, one of the most prominent New Right leaders, wrote in March, 1984, "Conservative in the black community means racist and that is understandable. The leadership on the right, however, bears no resemblance to the reactionary Southern icons of the past. . . . I am sure there are people who call themselves conservatives who are prejudiced. But the leaders are far from it." When journalists reported a New Right Republican making a racial slur, quick denunciation by right-wing leaders and an apology from the perpetrator usually followed.

Journalists, wanting to write about New Right racism, found themselves without a "smoking gun" to document the movement's racism. Further, the New Right embraced, published, and promoted a cadre of intellectuals of color who developed and refined an intellectual base for an attack on the civil rights movement. Such tactics proved effective in obscuring the New Right's racism.

New Right Republicans and their allies in the Reagan Administration came to office in 1980 with a clear agenda of rolling back the gains of the civil rights movement. But they did not promote the Old Right's form of white supremacism—based on the assertion that whites are biologically superior to Blacks. They renounced that position and instead promoted what sociologist Amy Ansell has called "the new racism," a term that captures the contemporary right's more subtle style of racism. Its trademarks are the abandonment of a commitment to equality and a redefinition of the principle of fairness. The new racism declares group identities to be irrelevant. From the right's perspective, the logic is simple: There is no more racial discrimination; therefore race is not a characteristic that should be acknowledged in hiring or promotion; therefore people should be judged on the basis of "merit" alone. Affirmative action based on race or gender becomes both

inappropriate (because group identities have no significance) and unfair (because it does not consider *only* the qualifications of each individual applicant). This right-wing argument masterfully captures the themes and language of the civil rights movement and twists them to defeat the movement's goals.

Two well-known intellectuals who are at the heart of this practice are Harvard history professor Stephan Thernstrom and his wife, Abigail Thernstrom. Self-described "1950s liberals," they are more accurately rightist libertarians who have focused on affirmative action as the greatest of liberalism's mistakes. In their widely reviewed 1997 book, *America in Black and White*, they argue that Black progress is chronically underestimated, and racial attitudes in the United States have improved so dramatically that it is now "dangerous" to promote affirmative action, which often hurts Blacks. Their personal mission is to promote "colorblind" policies as the only true reflection of the original intent of liberal racial programs. Although Abigail Thernstrom doesn't like to be considered a conservative, she is a senior fellow at the rightist Manhattan Institute and has served on the boards of three movement organizations—the Institute for Justice, the Center for Equal Opportunity, and the Cato Institute. The Thernstroms' research for their book was supported by grants from at least three rightist foundations, as well as by a grant of \$180,000 from the John M. Olin Foundation to promote the book.

Abigail Thernstrom outshines her husband as an established voice of opposition to affirmative action. She has been a high-profile opponent of race-based programs since the early 1980s, and *America in Black and White* is her second book on the necessity for colorblind policies. The Thernstroms' next book is to be a study of the growing gap in academic performance between Black and white students in grades K-12.

By asserting that racism is a thing of the past, the right can justify dismantling the programs and policies put in place as a result

Institutional Racism

In the late 1960s, progressive social change activists and social scientists coined the phrase "institutional racism" to describe how racial inequality is built into the structure of American politics and social arrangements. Institutional racism goes beyond individual racist ideology and acts. It pervades the "normal workings" of social, economic, political, religious, legal, and medical institutions, systematically placing people of color at a disadvantage. It is in the practices and procedures of these institutions that status and opportunities for people of color are constructed unequally.

One example of institutional racism in the educational sphere is the contrast between an inner city public school, which tends to have a higher proportion of students of color, with a suburban public school which is apt to have a majority of white students. In an inner city school class sizes tend to be larger, textbooks are often unavailable or outdated and buildings tend to be older and in need of repair. In wealthier suburban schools, on the other hand, class size tends to be smaller, textbooks are usually up-to-date and available and the facilities are generally maintained. Meanwhile graduates are held to the same standard without regard for the unequal preparation that different educational environments create.

of pressure from the civil rights movement. For example, welfare programs, affirmative action programs, protection of the rights of criminal defendants, bilingual education, and services for immigrants are all policy initiatives that the right has painted as serving “undeserving” individuals at the expense of “deserving” taxpayers. The right maintains that the effects of these policies are race-neutral, while at the same time using vicious racial stereotypes to fan whites’ racial resentments. The result has been a virtual war by the right against people of color, waged behind a smoke-screen of race neutrality.

For the most part, people of color have not been fooled. Writing about African Americans, Harvard sociologist Lawrence D. Bobo states:

All too often, a major subtext of campaigns about reducing welfare and fighting crime is a narrative about generally retaining white status privilege over blacks, and specifically about controlling and punishing poor black communities. This thinly veiled racial subtext of American politics is not lost on the black community. It feeds a growing suspicion and distrust among African Americans that white-dominated institutions may be moving toward overt hostility to the aspirations of African American communities.

By his own survey research into the nature of white racism, and his analysis of the research of others, Bobo has found that the right’s “new racism” has now permeated public opinion. While support for Jim Crow racial practices has declined steadily since the 1940s, it has been replaced by the right’s formulation: People of color are

responsible for their own disadvantaged circumstances because racism is no longer a social problem. Bobo also finds that the white public is increasingly reluctant to support any role for government in correcting what racism may still occur. This is especially true in the case of programs such as affirmative action that attempt to address racism not as a problem of individual prej-

time now for white people to mount a movement to protect *their* “civil rights.”

But there are several ways of seeing affirmative action and several ways of practicing it. For those who support a “color blind” approach to racial equality, such as US Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, there is no place in hiring or promotion for any consideration of race. The only acceptable form of affirmative action, therefore, is outreach to, and recruitment of, candidates of color and white women. This “weak” affirmative action does not ensure that these candidates will get to be represented in the workplace. It only opens up the opportunity for everyone to compete for jobs, often in settings where people of color and/or white women have been excluded from competing in the past.

“Weak” affirmative action has strong bipartisan support. Even the

New Right could not attack the practice of creating equal access for job *applicants*. Weak affirmative action does not promote consideration of race as a factor in the actual *hiring* process. “Strong” affirmative action, however, challenges the “color blind” principle of fairness in an attempt to go beyond open competition for jobs. Its goal is to achieve a more equitable race and gender distribution among employees and in their promotions.

“Strong” affirmative action requires that employers set up timetables to meet targets or goals for hiring people of color and white women in order to increase their presence in the workplace. To meet these targets, goals, or, in some rare cases, quotas, an employer may choose a candidate of color or white woman who is qualified over another qualified white male candidate. Some proponents of “strong” affirmative action advocate hiring minorities in per-

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udice, but as a problem of a racist society that systematically discriminates against certain groups.

Weak and Strong Affirmative Action

In rightists’ attacks on affirmative action, the terms “affirmative action,” “preferential treatment,” and “reverse discrimination” are often used interchangeably. This clever political ploy blurs the distinctions between different types of affirmative action and helps to create the mistaken impression that all affirmative action involves quotas. By further suggesting (repeatedly and incorrectly) that whites, in particular white men, experience “reverse discrimination” as a result of affirmative action “quotas,” the right’s leadership has created a now widely-held belief that affirmative action is harmful and unfair to white people. According to the right, it is

centages equal to their proportion in the larger population. The right consistently fails to distinguish among types of affirmative action and portrays all affirmative action as “strong.”

One point of contention in “strong” affirmative action is whether the “hand up” it gives to people of color and white women should apply only to those who have suffered quantifiable discrimination, or to all who belong to a group that has been discriminated against in the past. Affirmative action opponent Carl Cohen has framed this distinction as “redress for injury” vs. “entitlement by color.” The right opposes any affirmative action practice that bestows preference on the basis of race or gender, absent proof of individual past discrimination. Rightists sometimes argue that affirmative action is unfair because it penalizes whites who themselves never discriminated and sometimes argue that it rewards people who never were actual victims of discrimination. In making the latter argument, rightist authors often underscore their assertion that racial discrimination is a thing of the past.

Examples of strong and weak affirmative action are found in the AT&T Model Plan. In accordance with the 1973 Consent Decree, AT&T practiced strong affirmative action for six years, until it was able to break down racial and gender stereotypes and integrate the workforce by race and gender. Its hiring and firing policies then reverted to weak affirmative action—essentially a policy of non-discrimination.

The Neoconservative Critique

We see the purposeful blurring of the distinction between weak and strong affirmative action in the first widely-distributed salvo in the right’s attack on affirmative action, neoconservative scholar Nathan Glazer’s 1975 book *Affirmative*

Discrimination. Glazer articulated nearly every argument in the backlash attack on affirmative action, and to this day critics have added little to it. Glazer played a familiar neoconservative role: to develop the intellectual arguments that subsequently evolve into a full-scale right-wing campaign. This pattern has been particularly common to matters in which race is central, such as welfare “reform.”

As early as the mid-1970s, it seemed clear that neoconservatism represented a com-

liberal credentials. But his tone and language belie this liberal veneer throughout the book, including his use of the inflammatory title, *Affirmative Discrimination*. Glazer embraced the role of liberal heretic, nowhere more so than when he argued that by 1973, racial discrimination in the labor market was no longer an issue, therefore affirmative action was no longer needed. This is his most lasting (and shameful) contribution to the anti-affirmative action position.

Glazer also contributed nearly all the ideas that were to become the right’s critique of affirmative action, especially that it violates “the first principle of liberal society” by tampering with equality of opportunity. He argued that by recognizing group rights above individual rights, affirmative action re-establishes a

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basis for discrimination and therefore is not an extension of the civil rights movement. Glazer reviewed instance after instance of bureaucratic rigidity in the application of affirmative action guidelines to support his one-sided argument that affirmative action will lead to discrimination rather than bring society relief from it. In this argument-by-aneecdote, Glazer built his case that:

• Affirmative action addresses a problem that no longer exists, because, as of 1973, there were no more patterns of discrimination in the labor market.

• Affirmative action violates the rights of the individual to be treated in a “color blind” way. Here Glazer pioneers another tactic, used by many who followed him, by going back to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to point to an injunction in the Act against forcing any employer to grant preferential treatment. Affirmative action, he argues, defies this injunction by favoring one group over another, thus forcing employ-

elling redesign of Old Right ideas. Most neoconservatives started their political careers as leftist or liberal Democrats, then switched their allegiance to the Republicans, in part because they were deeply opposed to communism. Their former Democratic Party affiliations gave them a reputation as moderates, with a thoughtful and mature vision born in idealism but tempered by experience.

Neoconservatives were, and still are, punitive toward the poor, snide when attacking any category of people they consider muddle-headed or soft-hearted, forgiving of dictators so long as they are anticommunist, and condescending toward their fellow rightists. No one book more accurately captures the nasty tone and right-wing content of neoconservative thought than Glazer’s *Affirmative Discrimination*. And no book better illustrates how important neoconservatives have been to the development of the contemporary right’s ideas.

Glazer presented himself as a scholar who opposed racism and claimed some mildly

ers to show preferential treatment to members of one group.

- Affirmative action creates a white backlash. “Compensation for the past,” Glazer says, “is a dangerous principle. It can be extended indefinitely and make for endless trouble.”
- If a hiring process is based on judging applicants’ “qualifications,” one cannot prove that a group has been discriminated against on the basis of race just because members of that group do not appear in certain job categories in numbers equal to their numbers in the larger society. When the goal becomes “statistical parity” between a group of employees and the larger society, the original intent of affirmative action—to refrain from discriminating and to announce, when advertising the job, that the employer does not discriminate—has been superseded by “quotas.” Instead, Glazer argues, perhaps the members of one group just “qualify” for jobs more frequently than the members of another.
- Affirmative action does not help the most disadvantaged members of minority groups, those it was presumably designed to help, because the benefits accrue to all members of a category, whether those members are, in fact, targets of discrimination or not.

Racist assumptions run throughout Glazer’s argument. If, as he maintains, there is no more discrimination in the labor market, yet many African American and other people of color remain locked out of jobs, he can only be arguing that whites are better at meeting job qualifications. The explanation lies either in the genetic inferiority of racial/ethnic minorities or in the institutional racism that results in poor preparation for jobs, poor educational opportunities, low quality housing, and poor health care, all of which contribute to a lowered ability to compete for jobs.

But Glazer explicitly critiques and dis-

misses the notion of institutional racism. He says: “This term has not been subjected to the analysis it deserves. It is obviously something devised in the absence of clear evidence of discrimination and prejudice. It suggests that, without intent, a group may be victimized.” Glazer sees institutional racism as an empty concept, a device used to explain differences in hiring patterns of people of color and whites, and an assertion based on no evidence.

Glazer himself would not say that the failure of people of color to “keep up” with whites in the labor market results from genetic inferiority. Nevertheless, his attack on affirmative action is a crucial paving stone on the path to genetic determinism.

In *Affirmative Discrimination*, Glazer is concerned about the disruption of the *status quo*, a system of rewards in hiring and promotion that he sees as maintaining high standards—rewards based on qualifications and high levels of performance. He implies that creating statistical parity means opening jobs for “unqualified” people of color, and he is particularly worried that a white backlash will result when whites resent “those of lesser competence and criminal inclination” who will benefit from affirmative action. Glazer never entertains the corollary argument that the current employment of whites “of lesser competence and criminal inclination” is a matter for policy discussion. He argues that improving access for people of color will lower hiring and promotion standards and discriminate against whites, ignoring the possibility that it would improve the workplace, increase fairness in the larger society, or expand the talent pool by including those who have been excluded.

Glazer’s assertion that whites are harmed by affirmative action has become widespread public opinion. Analyzing data from the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) in 1990 and 1994, sociologist Orlando Patterson concludes that, whereas 70 percent of whites surveyed believed that affirmative action was harming white people, only 7 percent had experienced “reverse discrimination,” and only 16 percent knew

of someone close to them who had. Patterson goes further to conclude that “the vast majority of Euro-Americans are actually quite content with the affirmative action programs *with which they are acquainted at their own workplaces.*” (italics in original) Here we see the effects of what Patterson calls the “concocted controversy” over egregious harm done to whites by the practice of affirmative action.

Although *Affirmative Discrimination* has been called “the bible of neoconservative thought” on affirmative action, Glazer has had a change of heart in the late 1990s, and began to support affirmative action, to the fury of his neoconservative colleagues. He argues that affirmative action is necessary to preserve the legitimacy of American democracy. As a result, Nathan Glazer is enjoying another run in the public spotlight, as the defender of affirmative action, making precisely the same arguments about equal opportunity for people of color that he spent much of his career denying and blocking.

Black Conservatives Insert a Wedge

Throughout the late 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s many other rightists built on Nathan Glazer’s influential text. A number of these critics of affirmative action are people of color; of all those, “Black conservatives” are the greatest in number and in influence. Nearly every prominent critic of affirmative action who is a person of color is male. Linda Chavez, former director of the US Commission on Civil Rights in the Reagan Administration and now head of the Center for Equal Opportunity, an organization dedicated to opposing affirmative action, is the rare exception. Most of the critics of color have asserted, like Glazer, that the civil rights movement succeeded in dismantling the racial barriers of the Jim Crow era, making affirmative action policies unnecessary.

Black conservatives Thomas Sowell, Walter Williams, Shelby Steele, Glen Loury, and Stephen Carter, as well as other scholars of color, such as Dinesh D’Souza and

Linda Chavez, play a politically important role in the right's attack on affirmative action. Criticisms of civil rights goals and support for the dismantling of affirmative action by a person of color, especially a Black person, whom affirmative action was originally intended to benefit, legitimize the racially hostile white critique of affirmative action. The New Right leadership has been acutely aware of this racial dynamic. It is no accident that, at the same time that Clarence Thomas complained that Black conservatives were barely accepted within the white New Right establishment, Black conservative intellectuals who attacked affirmative action were widely published in New Right outlets.

Black scholars who oppose affirmative action are not necessarily part of a political movement. They prefer to label themselves as "conservative" rather than as full members of the New Right. Some Black conservatives have attained prominence within mainstream media outlets and have written for liberal, as well as rightist, presses and periodicals. But many of them have documented ties to the right, are supported by right-wing institutions, and speak within right-wing venues. Equally important, their ideas have become central to the New Right's analysis of civil rights, not only in the area of affirmative action.

Thomas Sowell and Walter Williams are two Black conservatives whose careers illustrate the links between Black conservatives and the right. Both men became identified with the New Right after movement organizations began to supplement their incomes, publish their work, especially in neoconservative publications such as *Commentary* and *The Public Interest*, and adopt their ideas and arguments.

Sowell, who was a student of libertarian economist Milton Friedman at the University of Chicago, is the most widely-published of the Black conservatives. He is a free market purist who emphasizes self-reliance and opposes government intervention in any form, and is a social traditionalist who dissents from the civil rights movement's liberal ideology. For many years, Sowell has

been a professor of economics at UCLA, and a senior fellow at the right-wing Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace.

Sowell was an early critic of affirmative action. In 1975, the same year that Nathan Glazer published *Affirmative Discrimination*, the American Enterprise Institute, a rightist think tank where Sowell was an adjunct scholar, published his slim booklet titled *Affirmative Action Reconsidered*. Sowell's booklet was not widely circulated and is narrowly focused on academia, but many of his arguments are the same as those promoted by the higher-profile Glazer. Sowell asserts that affirmative action violates the spirit and intent of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and that job discrimination in academia had become a thing of the past before affirmative action was instituted. Sowell, like Glazer, ignores institutional racism.

Walter Williams, a widely published conservative economist, joins Sowell in arguing that the key to "minority group" progress is economic success. He criticizes the civil rights movement, with its emphasis on political clout, for offering African Americans false promises of progress. Especially egregious, according to Williams, is the damage done to Black economic progress by government affirmative action programs, which violate free market principles of supply and demand, and harm minority groups by interfering with the very mechanism (the free market) which holds the most promise for economic success for poor communities. Williams's work, especially his 1982 book, *The State against Blacks*, has received support from right-wing sources, including the Hoover Institution, the Heritage Foundation, and the Scaife Foundation. The book is a publication of McGraw-Hill's New Press, but is identified as a "Research Book" of the rightist Manhattan Institute.

Black conservatives adamantly assert that their beliefs are not contrary to the interests of people of color. But, in part because their work is so useful to the right's attack on affirmative action and on other gains of the civil rights movement, the

majority of Black leadership has furiously denounced them. No two Black conservatives have been more denounced than Justice Clarence Thomas and Ward Connerly, a member of the University of California Board of Regents and spokesperson for Proposition 209, California's 1996 anti-affirmative action initiative. Although both men have themselves benefited enormously from affirmative action programs, as have most of the critics of color discussed here, their opposition to it seems to be the central principle driving most of their career decisions.

In one of the earliest studies of Black conservatives, sociologist Deborah Toler sees contemporary Black conservatism as consistent with a long-standing "Black bourgeois mythology" that has long asserted that middle-class African Americans are different from (and superior to) the Black majority. To establish this difference, Toler argues, members of the Black bourgeoisie insist they do not manifest the attitudes and behaviors associated with negative Black stereotypes, but instead identify with the positive attitudes and behaviors associated with white stereotypes. As a result, a sector of the Black bourgeoisie has been characterized by political conservatism and an acute sensitivity to white opinion. The progressive African American scholar Cornel West sees Black conservatives similarly. According to West, the members of the Black bourgeoisie who align themselves with the right are engaged in a middle-class identity crisis, as they both seek white approval and distinguish themselves from "the state of siege that rages in working-poor and very poor communities."

Glen Omatsu, discussing Asian American neoconservatives, sees a similar link between class status and conservative politics among Asian American conservatives. But Asian American conservatives, in addition to distinguishing themselves from working-class Asian Americans, distinguish themselves from other communities of color, which they see as lacking their own high level of commitment to education,

achievement, and traditional values. Often they blame quotas, which set *upper* limits on the admission of Asian Americans to colleges and universities, and on affirmative action programs for African Americans, Latinos and American Indians, whom they see as “less qualified.” Asian American conservatives are largely professionals who speak to other professionals, and ignore the great need for affirmative action on the part of large numbers of poor Asian Americans.

Fanning the White Backlash

While Black conservatives played an enormously influential role in refining the intellectual arguments against affirmative action and giving them increased legitimacy, the books of two white scholars, George Gilder and Charles Murray, took these positions into mainstream public debate and received widespread media attention during the Reagan Administration. Gilder’s *Wealth and Poverty* and Murray’s *Losing Ground* reframed the Old Right’s explicit racism into the coded discourse of the new racism. By calling for the legislative rollback of *all* anti-poverty programs, including welfare, housing subsidies, job training, and affirmative action, they were in tune with both Reagan Administration policy and an ongoing shift in public opinion regarding poor people, especially poor people of color. By breaking out of academic intellectual circles and becoming best-selling authors, Gilder and Murray were able to reach the white legislators and opinion-makers who were crafting the rollback of affirmative action.

In *Wealth and Poverty* (1981), Gilder popularized many of the arguments incubated in the late 1960s and 1970s in the pages of relatively obscure right-wing publications, especially the Old Right *Human Events* and the neoconservative *Public Interest*. According to Gilder, poverty is caused by liberalism and its wrong-headed thinking about values and family structure. He is particularly disdainful of the “equal rights conglomerate,” especially the EEOC. Gilder argues that governmental bureaucracy is a universally evil influence on a society that

would do a far better job of creating wealth and eliminating poverty if it abolished all government programs and adopted the free-market model of Milton Friedman and his “Chicago School” of Economics.

In *Losing Ground* (1984), Charles Murray builds on Gilder’s arguments. He points to the increase in government transfer programs and the simultaneous increase in “social problems” as evidence that liberalism has made poverty and crime worse. He accuses liberal whites of “excessive solicitude” and “condescension” toward Blacks in maintaining that Blacks are owed a debt, and that when they fail to succeed, it is because the system is stacked against them. In discussing affirmative action and set-aside programs, Murray holds a typical take-no-prisoners position: “My proposal for dealing with the racial issue in social welfare is to repeal every bit of legislation and reverse every court decision that in any way requires, recommends, or awards differential treatment according to race, and thereby puts us back onto the track we left in 1965.”

Quite understandably, New Rightists Gilder and Murray became the darlings of the Republican policy establishment. Backed and promoted by the New Right’s think tanks, they benefited from their media savvy. The Manhattan Institute sup-

ported Murray as a senior research fellow when he published *Losing Ground*. It raised \$125,000 to promote his book and paid him a stipend of \$35,000. Most of the money came from two prominent funders of New Right organizations, the Scaife Foundation and the John M. Olin Foundation. The Manhattan Institute has also supported George Gilder.

Gilder and Murray point to the “dependency” caused by liberal programs and the “culture of poverty” these programs encourage as responsible for poverty. From this perspective, poverty is the fault of the individual poor person, whom they often portray, in anecdote and example, as an undeserving, unmotivated, dependent, and sometimes rapacious person of color. Although Gilder and Murray certainly did not *cause* the Reagan Administration’s legislative attack on the poor, their books were crucial to popularizing an image of a poor person as both Black and “undeserving.” And this image, in turn, enhanced the backlash against programs such as affirmative action that the right painted as “favoring” Blacks and other “undeserving” people of color.

In keeping with the new racism, Gilder and Murray, like Nathan Glazer and the Black conservatives, present themselves as “true” civil rights advocates, conservatives who take Blacks seriously and treat them



“Sorry, Mr. Barnes. We’ve gone back to the days of being a colorblind institution, when we’d see our applicants in black and white.”

fairly, as individuals who must stand or fall on their own merits. In their attacks on liberalism, their critique of liberal attitudes toward Blacks and other people of color is often on target. Their accusations that white liberals patronize voters of color, use people of color as tokens, and relate to people of other races in a paternalistic, rather than power-sharing, style all too often portray liberal arrogance in action. By exposing these shortcomings in liberal race attitudes, Gilder and Murray become more effective agents of the right's backlash appeal to white voters. What reveals the hypocrisy of their arguments is their denial of existing racism, their dismissal of the need to level the playing field, and their sneering disdain for the ongoing struggle for equal rights.

Affirmative Action, the New Right, and the Reagan Administration

During Ronald Reagan's presidency, most Administration policy initiatives and decisions were either derived from, or informed by, such right-wing think tanks as the Heritage Foundation, the Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress (now the Free Congress Foundation), and the American Enterprise Institute. Nowhere was this more obvious than in the area of affirmative action. The "color blind" argument—that one should ignore race because it is not a legitimate consideration in hiring, admission to colleges, or job promotion and affirmative action—quickly became the ruling ideological position within the Administration. Its members denounced racial group preference as a bad means for achieving equality, maintaining that racial minorities do not have legitimate collective interests. Results, the Administration argued, do not have to be equal, so long as employers and educational institutions provide equal opportunity to compete for jobs and admissions.

Rightist Reagan Administration appointees implemented many of the policies that rolled back affirmative action enforcement. Many of them were strategically placed in the bureaucracies respon-

sible for administering and enforcing civil rights protections in general and affirmative action in particular. Reagan appointed Black conservative Clarence Pendleton as head of the US Commission on Civil Rights, and another Black conservative, Clarence Thomas, as chair of the EEOC. White rightist William Bradford Reynolds was appointed Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights in the Justice Department, where he defined all affirmative action as "quotas" and insisted that discrimination could not be charged without proof of "intent."

Such a position was difficult to hold publicly because the Reagan Administration portrayed itself as a friend of civil rights. But while wanting to maintain this image, the Administration agreed politically with New Right leaders in their push for a complete rollback of all programs except those that addressed cases of discrimination on an individual basis. To simultaneously satisfy the need for a pro-civil rights image and pursue an anti-civil rights agenda, the Reagan Administration defunded the civil rights enforcement arms it controlled.

The Bush Administration continued this policy with greater momentum and success, as the Supreme Court and the lower courts became increasingly dominated by Reagan and Bush appointees. The Reagan and Bush Administrations accounted for half of the appointments to the Supreme Court, virtually guaranteeing a rightist tilt to its decisions. The departure of Justices Harry Blackmun, William Brennan, Thurgood Marshall, and Byron White deprived the Court of its liberal civil rights supporters. The Reagan/Bush appointments of Anthony M. Kennedy, Sandra Day O'Connor, Antonin Scalia, and Clarence Thomas and Reagan's appointment of William Rehnquist as Chief Justice, have reversed the court's previous liberal bent.

The Reagan Administration's policies on affirmative action exemplify the "new racism." Despite that Administration's pro-civil rights rhetoric, its policies rolled back both the practice of affirmative action and the enforcement of civil rights laws. In

addition to opposing affirmative action, the Reagan Administration initially supported tax exemptions for the private, segregated academies set up in the South to avoid legally mandated integration in the public schools. It supported South Africa at a time when US Blacks and others were urging a boycott of its apartheid regime. It opposed school busing, a strong Voting Rights Act, and the celebration of Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday as a national holiday. It pursued a policy of "states' rights," a phrase that surely had enormous appeal for the Old Right southerners who had used it to justify segregation in the 1950s and 1960s.

George Bush, who accurately perceived his need for the support of the New Right and the increasingly powerful Christian Right, often promoted programs and policies that blocked the advancement of people of color, despite his reputation as less "racially insensitive" than Reagan. The Bush Administration carried out the policies of the Reagan Administration, including the smear of women receiving welfare as "welfare queens" (stereotyped as lazy and sexually promiscuous Black women); opposition to race-conscious electoral districting that increased the chances of Blacks winning office; the appointment of conservative judges hostile to civil rights; and support for the death penalty, without regard for its disproportionate use against people of color. Like the Reagan Administration, the Bush Administration saved its most florid and explicit rhetoric for the attack on "preferences and quotas." During both Administrations, opposition to affirmative action played an important role in the New Right's strategy of appealing to a white ethnic and southern backlash against civil rights and against the Democratic Party.

The Bell Curve

During the Bush Administration, a split occurred within the electoral right. The extreme right of the New Right took the humorous name "paleo-conservatives," to distinguish themselves from the "softer" members of the New Right. Prominent

paleo-conservatives include Pat Buchanan, Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC) and Alan Keyes, African American talk show host and political candidate. No book has stated the paleo-conservative case on race in a more incendiary fashion than *The Bell Curve* (1994), co-authored by Charles Murray and the late Richard Herrnstein. For over 800 pages, the authors make the case that race and class inequalities in society can be explained by differences in genetically determined intelligence, not by institutional racism, unequal opportunity, or differences in social and economic circumstances.

On the topic of affirmative action, *The Bell Curve* is consistent with Nathan Glazer's *Affirmative Discrimination*, written twenty years earlier, and with many of the arguments made by Black conservatives. In two chapters devoted entirely to this topic, Herrnstein and Murray argue that affirmative action defies the reality of a gap between the elite and the rest. They assert that people find their "natural" place in society based on IQ. When affirmative action violates the "natural" assignment of a place, the result is negative stereotyping and lowered self-esteem. The authors argue that affirmative action is no longer needed because, before the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Blacks had already attained "job fairness," meaning jobs that match their IQ's.

The Bell Curve is a departure from the New Right's renunciation of explicit racism. Its assumptions update the work of an independently wealthy nineteenth century Englishman, Francis Galton, who coined the term "eugenics"—the study of hereditary characteristics that may improve or impair the racial qualities of future generations, either physically or mentally. In the US, the premiere organization dedicated to preserving the idea and practice of racial eugenics is the Pioneer Fund, which funded the two most notorious contemporary eugenicists, Arthur Jensen and William Schockley. Pioneer Fund head Harry F. Weyher regretted not funding Herrnstein to write *The Bell Curve* and acknowledged that "we'd have funded him at the drop of a hat, but he never asked."

The Bell Curve became a widely-reviewed bestseller, with most commentators condemning it on both intellectual and political grounds. One of the better-known exposés of the authors' slippery use of statistics is Stephen Jay Gould's "Mismeasure by Any Measure," which details both the book's erroneous use of statistics and the fallacy of its central assumption that intelligence can be measured by the use of g, a

The Reagan Administration's policies on affirmative action exemplify the "new racism." Despite that Administration's pro-civil rights rhetoric, its policies rolled back both the practice of affirmative action and the enforcement of civil rights laws.

"general factor" of intelligence. A group of six scholars collaborated on a book-length critique of *The Bell Curve*'s social science and politics, and a vast array of journalists and writers, representing the many racial and ethnic identities slandered by the book, wrote masterful denunciations. Even some paleo-conservatives, such as Pat Buchanan, John McLaughlin, and Rush Limbaugh have criticized *The Bell Curve*, though other rightist publications gave it generally favorable reviews. Shockingly, reporters in some mainstream publications gave the book neutral or mildly sympathetic reviews, including Malcolm Browne, science reporter for the *New York Times*.

The Bell Curve embarrassed the leadership of the New Right, which attempted to

distance the movement from it. But it is a mistake to characterize the book as outside the ideology and public policy of the contemporary right. *The Bell Curve* is, instead, a logical progeny of the New Right's arguments against affirmative action. Its difference is in style, not basic assumptions or conclusions. The same indignation aroused by *The Bell Curve* should apply to New Right and neoconservative arguments that racial discrimination is a thing of the past, institutional racism does not exist, and race is no longer a factor in the lives of people of color. For if that is the case, then when people of color do less well in achievement tests or are not promoted in their workplaces as quickly as white people, no explanation remains except *The Bell Curve*'s explanation that they are "naturally" inferior.

New Rightists and neoconservatives are more than willing to state (and promote) the assertions that racial discrimination is exaggerated, or even a myth, and that institutional racism is the imaginary and unconfirmable creation of liberal intellectuals. But they want to disassociate themselves from the logical conclusion that the persistent inequality between white people and people of color is a result of the "inferiority" of people of color. When the President's Advisory Board on Race concluded in 1998 that "whites and Asians enjoy greater advantages economically and have better access to health care," and that "the social and economic progress of Blacks slowed between the mid-1970s and early 1990s, the economic status of Hispanics has declined in the last 25 years, and American Indians are the most disadvantaged ethnic group by far," the right remained silent. Unwilling to state the racist conclusions of its own assertions, it could offer no explanation except the conclusions of *The Bell Curve*. Yet the right's leadership adamantly denies racist intentions.

Certainly, many liberals have also shied away from naming institutional racism as the cause for lower average test scores among people of color. For example, Derek Bok and William G. Bowen, in *The Shape of the River*, present evidence that African American students lag behind white stu-

Conservative Organizations Opposed to Affirmative Action *A Selected, Annotated List*

AMERICAN CIVIL RIGHTS INSTITUTE

P.O. Box 188350, Sacramento, CA 95818
916.444.2278, www.acri.org

Founded in 1997 by Ward Connerly. Works "toward eliminating racial and gender preferences at the state and federal level." Using California's Proposition 209 as a model, ACRI provides financial assistance and strategic advice to other state campaign efforts to roll back affirmative action. Currently targeting Florida (see the Florida Civil Rights Initiative). The political organizing arm of ACRI is the American Civil Rights Coalition.

ATLANTIC LEGAL FOUNDATION

205 E. 42nd Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10017
212.573.1969

Opposes various affirmative action programs in New York state. Works "to advocate the principles of limited government, the free market system, and the rights of individuals."

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOUNDATION

815 15th Street, Washington, DC 20005
202.639.0803, www.ceousa.org

Founded by Linda Chavez, former director of the US Commission on Civil Rights during the Reagan Administration. Works to promote a "color-blind society," opposes affirmative action and bilingual education. Funding sources include the John M. Olin Foundation, Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, and the Scaife Family Foundation among others. Hosts the Center for Equal Opportunity.

CENTER FOR INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

1300 19th Street, NW, Suite 260
Washington, DC 20036
202.833.8400,
www.wdn.com/cir/index/html

Brings lawsuits to strike down affirmative action. Among its notable cases is the 1996 *Hopwood v. Texas* case, which struck down an affirmative action admission policy at the University of Texas Law School. Funding sources include the John M. Olin Foundation, Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, and the Scaife Family Foundation among others.

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF POPULAR CULTURE

P.O. Box 67398, Los Angeles, CA 90067

Publishes *Heterodoxy*. Founded by Peter Collier and David Horowitz, former publishers of the 60's leftist magazine *Ramparts*. Special focus is to get rid of "political correctness." Funding sources include the John M. Olin Foundation, Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, and the Scaife Family Foundation among others.

CLARE BOOTH LUCE POLICY INSTITUTE

112 Elden Street, Suite P
Herndon, VA 20170
888.891.4288

Established in 1993 by Clare Booth Luce, a "widely admired conservative leader, as well as a loving wife and mother." Works "to refute the widely accepted myth that feminists speak for women in America."

CLAREMONT INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF STATESMANSHIP AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

250 W 1st St, Suite 330
Claremont, CA 91711
909.621.6825, www.claremont.org

Founded in 1979. Board of Directors includes Howard Ahmanson, ultra-conservative millionaire and activist. In 1996 the Center focused extensively on affirmative action.

FLORIDA CIVIL RIGHTS INITIATIVE

P.O. Box 10875, Tallahassee, FL 32302
800.711.5498, www.fcir.net

The American Civil Rights Coalition's (ACRC) state organization in Florida. FCRI is mounting an aggressive campaign to amend the state constitution to end affirmative action. While claiming to be a grass roots initiative, it is staffed and run from Sacramento, CA through the ACRC.

INDEPENDENT WOMEN'S FORUM

2111 Wilson Blvd, Suite 550
Arlington, VA 22201
800.224.6000, www.iwf.org

IWF representatives have testified before Congress to defund the Violence Against Women Act and against affirmative action. Contends that feminists create "woman as victim" mentality.

INSTITUTE FOR JUSTICE

1717 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20006
202.955.1300, www.instituteforjustice.org

Public interest law firm, considered the ACLU of the right. Founded in 1991 by Chip Mellor and Clint Bolick. Bolick, formerly with the Landmark Legal Foundation, led the campaign to defeat Lani Guinier for Assistant US Attorney General for Civil Rights by labeling her "Clinton's Quota Queen."

LINCOLN INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH & EDUCATION

1001 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 1135
Washington, DC 20036
703.759.4599

Black Conservative organization. Publishes *The Lincoln Review*.

REASON FOUNDATION

3415 Sepulveda Blvd, Suite 400
Los Angeles, CA 90034
310.391.2245, www.reason.org

Libertarian research institute that promotes privatization and deregulation. Publishes *Reason*.

SOUTHEASTERN LEGAL FOUNDATION

3340 Peachtree Road, NE, Suite 2515
Atlanta, GA 30326
404.365.8500

Litigates against government regulations. Influential in Georgia and the South.

YOUNG AMERICA'S FOUNDATION

110 Elden Street, Herndon, VA 22070
703.318.9608, www.yaf.org

Founded in 1969. Works as a "national outreach campaign to bring conservative ideas to America's schools." Publishes *Campus Leader*.

dents in grade point average. These self-described supporters of affirmative action and liberals on matters of race speculate that such factors as the number of books at home, opportunities to travel, or the nature of the conversation around the dinner table may explain the gap. They, too, do not point to institutional racism.

New Republicans, New Tactics

In 1994, after a Republican electoral sweep created a Republican majority in both Houses of Congress, the incoming Republican “freshmen” were so far to the right of the New Right that they were dubbed “new Republicans.” Anti-affirmative action efforts increased dramatically, and have taken three forms: statewide initiatives banning affirmative action, lawsuits, and national anti-affirmative action legislation. To pursue these strategies, a number of new organizations, whose principal purpose is to defeat affirmative action have appeared.

In November 1996, California voters passed the first successful statewide anti-affirmative action initiative, Proposition 209 or the California Civil Rights Initiative (CCRI), banning the practice of affirmative action in state employment, education, and the letting of contracts. Another blow to affirmative action in 1996 was the decision in *Hopwood v. Texas*, in which a three-judge panel of the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals struck down an affirmative action admissions policy at the University of Texas Law School. Lawsuits have since been filed in several other states challenging affirmative action practices in college admissions. At the national level, a Congressional bill, “virtually written by Clint Bolick of the Institute for Justice,” would eliminate federal affirmative action. Initially known as the Dole-Canady Equal Opportunity Act, it has become simply the Canady Equal Opportunity Act.

In all these instances, the right exploited the language of civil rights to turn back civil rights advancements. It appropriated the term “civil rights” and used it to refer to the rights of white people. National organizations whose names might be taken to sig-

nal a liberal agenda, such as the American Civil Rights Institute, the Institute for Justice, the Center for Individual Rights, and the Center for Equal Opportunity, exist to roll back the gains of the civil rights movement, especially affirmative action.

In mounting its campaign against affirmative action, the new Republicans correctly identified a certain amount of grassroots opposition to affirmative action. Then, following a pattern developed in other right-wing campaigns, such as the anti-gay Amendment 2 campaign in Colorado and the campaigns against welfare recipients and immigrants, the organized right directed public attention to the issue, and defined it by using misleading language and distorted “statistics.” The right’s funders, strategists, adherents and politicians all collaborated to advance the campaign, putting their political and economic resources in support of the redefined issue.

In the case of California’s Proposition 209, Republican Governor Pete Wilson, a presidential candidate at the time, used the Proposition 209 campaign to promote himself as a card-carrying member of the right. Ward Connerly, a businessman and member of the University Board of Regents (which controls the University of California system of campuses, a central locus of the struggle over affirmative action in California), provided an African American voice of leadership by heading the principal pro-Proposition 209 organization, Yes on Proposition 209. Connerly went on to form the American Civil Rights Institute, whose mission is to replicate the Proposition 209 campaign in other states.

California’s Republicans and traditional right-wing donors played a major role in bankrolling the Proposition 209 campaign, contributing approximately \$1 million. Well-known right-wing funders also supported the effort, including media mogul Rupert Murdoch, who contributed \$750,000; Howard F. Ahmanson, Jr., who contributed \$350,000; and Richard Mellon Scaife, who contributed \$100,000. Altogether, Yes on Proposition 209 raised \$5,239,287, while its

main opponent, the Campaign to Defeat 209, raised \$2,185,086.

The story of the passage of Proposition 209 illustrates the complex interaction of the right’s effective political strategy, the political will of the players involved, and the skillful manipulation of language to exploit the negative mood of the voting public. One example of this interaction is the naming of Proposition 209, “The California Civil Rights Initiative,” which gave voters no clue that it would eliminate affirmative action rather than support civil rights. Voter confusion over the intent of the initiative was widespread. The right applied the same strategy in Washington State’s 1998 anti-affirmative action Initiative 200, known as I-200, which passed in November 1998.

In each state, the attorney general is responsible for giving the voters an impartial account of ballot initiatives. However, California’s Republican Attorney General Dan Lungren, who had often and candidly expressed his opposition to affirmative action, wrote a required summary of Proposition 209 that omitted any indication that it would eliminate affirmative action. Despite a court challenge to this sleight-of-hand, the wording was ultimately retained.

For a number of reasons, affirmative action supporters were not able to turn back Proposition 209. Because California Democrats hold varying views on affirmative action, the right was able to successfully use it as a “wedge” issue to split the Democratic Party’s coalition. The right also had good political timing, since Proposition 209 was on the ballot just when President Bill Clinton, running for reelection, was unwilling to take a forceful stand on behalf of affirmative action lest he lose Democratic votes and give a political advantage to his opponent, Senator Bob Dole. The Democratic National Committee and the Democratic State Central Committee of California contributed less than half as much money to defend affirmative action as the Republican Party contributed to defeat it. Afraid to take a forceful position in defense of affirmative action, the Democratic Party chose to keep its distance from

an initiative that would profoundly and negatively affect some of its most loyal constituents, but was supported by others. In Jesse Jackson's words at the time, "The Republicans are wedging while the Democrats are hedging."

The outcome of these rightist efforts is mixed, and the ultimate fate of affirmative action is unclear. Certainly it is weakened, perhaps fatally. Nevertheless, on November 4, 1997 voters defeated a local anti-affirmative action initiative in Houston, and, two days later, the US House Judiciary Committee voted to delay consideration of the Equal Opportunity Act (the Canady bill). Many supporters of the anti-affirmative action campaign seem shocked by the drastic effect of their work. For example, in California and Texas law schools, 1997 admission of Black students dropped 80 percent and 83 percent, respectively. So, affirmative action languishes, receiving only weak support from the Democratic Party, and opposed by a well-financed campaign conducted by the Republican Party and the organized right. As a widely accepted public policy, affirmative action may not be dead, but it has been stopped in its tracks.

Where Were the Defenders of Affirmative Action?

Although liberals were the architects of most affirmative action policies, they seem unwilling to mount a spirited defense of it in the face of the right's multi-pronged attack. The right's use of the "color blind" standard to attack affirmative action has not been adequately challenged, and liberals have not argued the existence of institutional racism to explain the need for affirmative action. Liberal Democratic Party officeholders, who have access to the resources and media exposure necessary to conduct effective public education, have, for the most part, been unwilling to expend political capital in defense of affirmative action.

Much of this lack of a liberal defense reflects changes in the Democratic Party and the weakness of liberalism in general during a period when it has been under relent-

less attack. Six of the most prominent liberal senators lost in the 1980 election as a result of the New Right's vicious anti-liberal smear campaign conducted by The National Conservative Political Action Committee (NCPAC), its Executive Director Terry Dolan, and a core of about a dozen right-wing organizations that made up the New Right. Those liberals remaining in Congress became reluctant to "go out on a limb" for any but a few carefully chosen issues. Affirmative action was not a strong contender.

Part of the New Right's strategy to lure white southerners and northern ethnic voters to the Republican Party was to argue that the Democratic Party had become the vehicle for "minority interests." The accusation worked well for the right. As Democratic voters crossed over to vote Republican, the progressive wing of the Democratic Party lost almost all influence within the Party, the liberal wing became weak, in numbers and in influence, and Democratic centrists became the dominant sector of the Party.

Democratic centrists argued that, if it were to survive, the Democratic Party must acknowledge that much of the white electorate had tired of any national effort to promote equality for people of color and (less so) for women. By electing Ronald Reagan, then George Bush, they argued, a plurality of white voters had sent a clear message that they were finished with two decades of racial progress, programs designed to empower the poor and marginal in society, and questions about the superiority of white, western European culture. The message that the major issues of racial discrimination in housing, employment, and promotion have been addressed by civil rights legislation and are now a thing of the past clearly has resonated with many white voters, because it speaks directly to their fatigue with social change and their growing resentment of advances by people of color.

Those liberals who have defended affirmative action have not been able to popularize even the most uncontested arguments in its favor: for instance, that preferences of

various sorts are often used in selection processes—such as, benefits for veterans, or college admission for athletes and the children of alumni and alumnae. What makes those practices acceptable, especially in the case of veterans and athletes, is the widely held judgment that these recipients are "appropriate" and "legitimate." Most white Americans do not extend the same benefit of the doubt to "average" people of color.

Further, while many white liberals are willing to argue that racial diversity at college and in the workplace has social value in habituating people of different races to each other, other white liberals (and even many progressives) have not been willing to present the cultures of people of color, or the hidden history of women's contributions, as unique, valuable, and strengthening components of "American culture." White liberal opinion-makers have not argued forcefully that often these cultures and contributions have been unacknowledged, or sometimes excluded, from mainstream cultural outlets. Apparently, for many white liberals, this message transcends the mandate of the civil rights movement they support and ventures too far from white America's self-image.

Most of those people who have mounted a strong defense of affirmative action are progressive rather than liberal, have little influence with centrist Democratic Party officeholders, and have only limited influence with liberals. Scholars such as Amy Ansell, K. Anthony Appiah, Ronald Dworkin, Amy Gutmann, Christopher Edley, Jr., Manning Marable, Salim Muwakkil, Stephen Steinberg, and Cornel West, who have spoken and written about the continuing need for affirmative action programs as the unfinished work of the civil rights movement, have not been able to parlay their arguments into the political clout necessary to hold elected officials accountable. Within critical legal studies, the work of Derrick Bell, Kimberle Crenshaw, Richard Delgado, Charles Lawrence III, Mari Matsuda, Patricia Williams, and many others, has broken the mold of traditional legal discourse to create new forms of debate

regarding the importance of, and necessity for, affirmative action. But, once again, this scholarship, though it has advanced our understanding of the necessity for affirmative action, has not translated into a strong campaign of public education to counter the right's "color blind" paradigm.

The right has constructed a double assault on liberalism's rationale for affirmative action: denying the existence of institutional racism, and confining the debate over fairness exclusively to individual rights. Liberals were left with two tasks: to prove that institutional racism exists, which they showed slight inclination to do; and to go beyond individual rights to argue that society must accept occasional individual unfairness to promote social justice. Liberals, it seems, lacked either a belief that institutional racism exists or the political courage to make it their message. When the scholars mentioned previously have argued that institutional racism is still prominent in the lives of people of color, and that sometimes the larger social good of correcting systemic injustices must take precedence over individual rights, the resulting debate has been confined primarily to an academic audience.

Ironically, many of the corporations which were initially forced by the federal government to create affirmative action programs now stand out as defenders of those programs, while elected politicians and right-wing activists are successfully dismantling affirmative action programs in the public sector and in higher education. A number of corporations have simply continued their existing affirmative action programs despite the right's attack. And, with the majority of public bureaucracies in the hands of conservative state- and local-level Republicans, it is within the corporate sector that there seems to be an appreciation of the value of diversity in the workplace and the advantages of tapping the entire breadth of the US talent pool—pragmatic rather than moral arguments. So long as the moral justification for affirma-



tive action remains muddled in the public's mind and infected with disinformation from the right, it appears that support for affirmative action will hang on most strongly where it is good for business.

Class-Based Affirmative Action

Some liberals and progressives, understanding that affirmative action as now conceived is unpopular with the public and likely to be under ever-increasing attack, are proposing that class replace race as a new basis for affirmative action. They reason that if affirmative action were based on class rather than race, it would apply to all races, and that race-neutrality would presumably calm the white backlash that has plagued race-based affirmative action. There is strong evidence that when social programs are universally applied—that is, when they apply to everyone who falls into a specific measurable category, such as low-income people—public opinion polls indicate more reliable support for them than when they favor only one segment of a group, such as low-income people of color. Class-based affirmative action also would address the increasing poverty of the "truly disadvantaged" by giving them a better chance for admission to educational opportunities,

employment, and promotion. It carries moral weight by addressing the *actual* victims of current discrimination and lack of opportunity. Under class-based affirmative action, a young Clarence Thomas would qualify, but his son or daughter would not.

Class-based affirmative action addresses a long-standing theme of progressive social justice work: the grossly unequal distribution of power and money in the United States, which the Republican agenda of low taxes and minimal social programs has now exacerbated. A final virtue of replacing race with class is that it may encourage coalitions across race. Class-based affirmative action might, therefore, breathe new life into the progressive movement by focusing it on a goal that minimizes intra-movement differences, and uniting it around progressives' common commitment to address unfair privilege.

The arguments for class-based affirmative action assume that its race- and gender-based version has disproportionately helped those best able to take advantage of it (primarily middle-class white women and middle-class people of color) and has left the weakest (of all races) in society behind. Harvard sociologist William Julius Wilson has been especially persistent in asserting that only middle-class African Americans

benefit from affirmative action. Because we don't have adequate research on affirmative action, Wilson's assertion has received wide acceptance. However, it seems unlikely to be correct, since so many affirmative action programs apply to working-class jobs in fire, police, and other municipal service jobs, and in both skilled and unskilled contracting work.

Nonetheless, the gap between the middle class and the poor clearly is growing (not to mention the increasing gap between the rich and the middle class), and, despite affirmative action's dramatic successes, the circumstances of the extremely disadvantaged have not improved markedly. Obviously much more is needed. Social programs in areas such as education, job training, employment, and food assistance, which often are proposed by Black conservatives as an alternative to affirmative action, are unlikely to be funded, given the current anti-poor attitudes among much of the voting public. So, a simmering debate among liberals and progressives is whether the "more" that is needed should be affirmative action programs that are class-based.

Advocates for both race-based and class-based affirmative action assume that race and class can be determined by scientific means. But each year scholars publish more research about how race is mutable, socially-constructed, and unscientific. A growing body of literature, especially studies of the historical transformation of groups from one racial or ethnic categorization to another, testifies to how racial categories can be assigned for political and social purposes. So long as race remains the basis for affirmative action (and gender for women—a less problematic categorization, though not without its own ambiguities), the lack of a scientific basis for racial classification will remain an issue.

The same ambiguity applies to class. Many social programs that are means-based require an applicant to prove the need for service or assistance. Numerous accounts detail the difficulties and indignities suffered by people who must provide "proof" of their need. As with race, generalizations are pos-

sible; for instance, all those without a high school education are less advantaged than those who have a college degree. But individual variations allow injustices to occur. Both race and class are blunt instruments of measurement.

Nevertheless, although a class-based affirmative action program seems to comport with basic principles of fairness, the *consequences* of the shift from race-based to class-based affirmative action would make clear that class should not replace race as the primary determinant of compensatory actions. Because racial discrimination persists in the United States, and institutional racism pervades our society, the elimination of race-based affirmative action programs would again deny many people of color access to jobs, contracts, promotion, and admission to higher education. The introduction of class as the basis for affirmative action would not correct that exclusion because race discrimination persists across classes (as class discrimination persists across races). Even when a child faces positive life chances based on income or education, that child can be disadvantaged relative to a white child of the same income and education, simply because of skin color. Class should be allowed only as a factor to be considered *with* race.

Where race-based affirmative action has been eliminated, such as in California after the passage of Proposition 209, the number of people of color admitted to institutions of higher education has fallen dramatically. If class were substituted for race in affirmative action policies, the result would be similar. Because there are so many more white people than people of color in the United States (whites outnumber Blacks 8 to 1), and there are more white people who are poor than there are poor people of color (low-income whites outnumber low-income Blacks 2.5 to 1), the use of class-based affirmative action would help far more poor whites than poor non-whites. Further, in the case of higher education, white students from low-income families score higher on SAT tests than do Black students from low-income families.

Although, in seeking equal opportunity for all, race may not be the only proper basis for affirmative action, class should not be the only basis either. "Class" does not take color into account, and color is a complicating factor across class. "Class" also does not take gender into account, although gender discrimination excludes women from opportunities and promotions and results in their receiving disproportionately low pay.

A formula for affirmative action that takes race, gender, and class into account would be complicated to administer and may not be substantially more popular with the voting public than the current race- and gender-based policies. It may open the door to demands for affirmative action considerations from a broad range of groups that suffer discrimination and lack opportunity. Because race is so prominent in the hierarchy of American prejudices, the hostility to affirmative action "preferences" may persist in a "reformed" affirmative action that considered class as well as race and gender. But it would improve the fairness of affirmative action and better, if imperfectly, serve the goal of compensatory justice.

When rightists insist that discrimination based on race is a thing of the past and institutional racism is a myth, they promote an opportunistic reading of reality that many white voters are anxious to believe. By asserting that "color blind" policies represent a just distribution of social goods, the right steals a goal of the civil rights movement, pretends it has now been reached, and provides a comforting message for many white voters. These right-wing tactics have been politically successful. Unless progressives and liberals are more effective in exposing the right's misrepresentations and devious strategies, the defeat of affirmative action may even be perceived as a victory for universal fairness. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

Jean Hardisty is executive director of Political Research Associates.

Books Received

A Selected, Annotated List

Christel Manning

God Gave Us the Right: Conservative Catholic, Evangelical Protestant, and Orthodox Jewish Women Grapple with Feminism

New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1999, 283 pages, notes, bibliography, index.

More than another pun on the right, *God Gave Us the Right* unravels the variety of worldviews of women within three sectors of the Religious Right. Manning posits that these women, usually lumped together as rabid anti-feminists, actually utilize a variety of methods to integrate the contradictory norms of traditional religions as well as feminism, of which they are beneficiaries. Based on a series of case studies of individuals and groups, the book describes conservative religious women's acceptance of many feminist values, and their simultaneous rejection of the feminist movement.

Rebecca E. Klatch

A Generation Divided: The New Left, the New Right, and the 1960s

Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999, 386 pages, notes, appendices, index.

Another attempt to balance the political narrative of the 1960s by investigating conservative as well as progressive activism. Like *The Other Side of the Sixties* by John Andrew (see *The Public Eye*, Summer/Fall 1999), *A Generation Divided* compares activists from Young Americans for Freedom and Students for a Democratic Society, and the ways in which these individuals' identities were shaped by membership in these groups. With a particular emphasis on political identity and gender, Klatch discusses points of convergence between the right and left, as well as similarities in experience among members of both groups.

Juan F. Perea, editor

Immigrants Out! The New Nativism and the Anti-Immigrant Impulse in the United States

New York, NY: New York University Press, 1997, 342 Pages, notes, index.

Immigrants Out! is a useful analysis of contemporary anti-immigrant initiatives including California's successful proposition 187. Perea argues that nativist movements in the US date back to the 1700s, and that while the actors have changed slightly, the new nativism is merely an extension of previous efforts to exclude the "other," thereby defining the American identity. Essays include thorough historical, legal, and conceptual discussions of nativism as well as concepts of the border, immigration, and citizenship.

Richard Tafel

Party Crasher: A Gay Republican Challenges Politics as Usual

New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1999, 253 pages, index.

Richard Tafel—one of the leading gay conservatives in the US—provides a mostly anecdotal argument for why gay people should work within the Republican Party. Tafel argues, perhaps correctly, that the gay movement is made up of assimilationists, liberationists, and libertarians—the latter category includes Tafel. As a rightist libertarian, Tafel is so consumed with libertarian ideas of individual rights, free markets, and limited government, that he, like many of his Republican counterparts, fails to see why these ideas are regressive for many people of color and low-income people—populations that include many lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people. This book reads like a memoir. While it offers a good perspective of gay conservatism it is lacking in substantive analysis. Basically, *Party Crasher* is an easy read if you're interested in the life of a gay libertarian.

Robert C. Lieberman

Shifting the Color Line: Race and the American Welfare State

Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998, 306 pages, appendices, notes, index.

Lieberman manages to make discussions of policy fascinating, and racial tension clear-headed—a difficult feat which he pulls off effortlessly. The book confronts the paradox that the struggle for racial equality has made enormous strides, and yet, the state of racial equity is worse than ever. Its thesis is that race itself, in the political sense of the term, prevented the formation of a stable welfare state. This thesis is supported by a comparison of three programs created by the social security act of 1935; Old-Age Insurance, Unemployment Insurance, and Aid to Dependent Children (later AFDC), in which the latter was racialized while the first two were seen as entitlements and attained a high degree of equity. *Shifting the Color Line* is a balanced and highly readable analysis of the role of race in the creation of America's unusual welfare state.

Dennis King

Get the Facts on Anyone (3rd Edition)

New York, NY: MacMillan USA, 1999, 329 pages, bibliography and resources.

The third edition of an outstanding investigative manual by the author of *Lyndon Larouche and the New American Fascism*. Includes online and CD-ROM resources in addition to standard techniques of individual or organizational research. Scary, but useful.

Eyes RIGHT

LIFESTYLE TYRANTS

In a letter accompanying the October, 1999 issue of *The American Sentinel* (formerly *The Pink Sheet on the Left*), editor Lee Bellinger introduces a new "Investigative Report" titled "America's Emerging Lifestyle Tyrants and Their Secret Plan to Control Your Life."

Several conspiratorial themes are outlined in the letter. "America's lifestyle tyrants have erected programs to seek out and identify 'troubled homes' in the name of preventing child abuse. It's absolutely critical that you understand the nature of this new federal dragnet and how to safely (and subtly) steer your children and grandchildren clear of identification and indoctrination officials."

According to Bellinger, "lifestyle tyrants" also have an agenda to eliminate pleasure boats: "Albert Gore and his environmental cronies have already outlawed power boating in selected parts of the country. It's all part of a test case in which the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issues 'community compliance standards' and pull the strings of local governments to impose unpopular ordinances, such as those against boats and backyard barbecues (sic)."

Apparently, the "lifestyle tyrants" are opposed to Sport Utility Vehicles as well: "In my special Investigative Report we reveal why all lifestyle tyrants absolutely despise popular SUVs and want to force Americans to accept 'public transportation.'"

HOMESCHOOLED CHRISTIANS GOTO COLLEGE

A college designed specifically for Christian home-schooled children is expected to open its doors next fall in Purcellville, Virginia. Patrick Henry College (PHC) is the brainchild of Michael Farris and Bradley Jacob, both leaders in the Christian home-schooling move-

ment. Farris will serve as President of PHC and Jacob will be the Provost and Dean.

Farris envisions the school as a training ground for the future of the Christian frontier: all students will be government majors, striving to "transform America" by finding high-level staff positions in government in preparation to run for office. "Patrick Henry College's primary purpose is to train young people to serve effectively as future lawyers, judges, public servants and staff in the legislative, executive and judicial branches of federal, state and local government," notes the PHC website. According to one brochure, "Patrick Henry graduates will eventually hold some of the highest offices in the land."

PHC is an outgrowth of the ministries of the Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA) and the Home School Legal Defense Foundation (HSLDF). HSLDF donated 46 acres to house PHC and will pay for the construction of the first building.

CHRISTIAN STUDENTS FOR CHRIST

In an effort to "bring a Christian witness to public schools," The Center for Reclaiming America (CRA) is sponsoring a "Yes, I Believe in God" campaign. According to the September 1999 newsletter of Coral Ridge Ministries, the campaign's goal is to "stir young people to witness for Christ in America's public schools." In order to achieve this goal, CRA has produced a "Yes I Believe in God" kit which includes "a campaign T-shirt with logo on front and student freedoms listed on back, bracelet, three book covers, Gospel pamphlet, the Book of Hope (for teens who don't know Christ), a New Testament with Psalms and Proverbs, and instructions on how to form a Bible Club." CRA has also enlisted the help of Christian recording artist Rebecca St. James who will do radio spots and record a special song for the campaign.

STOPPING GAY PARENTS

The Family Research Institute, the Colorado-Springs-based organization lead by discredited psychologist Paul Cameron, is continuing to attack the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people through its pseudo-scientific studies. According to the September 1999 *Family Research Report*,

FRI has "published an array of empirical evidence that will be useful for defending traditional marriage." Most recently, FRI published a 1998 study of 40 appeals court cases involving gay and lesbian parents. The findings of the study include that "courts had determined the parents to be responsible in these cases for a number of harms to the children involved (e.g., molestation, hypersexualization). Of these 66 harms (97%) were blamed on the homosexual parent or his associates." FRI also is scheduled to publish "Homosexual Parents: Testing Common Sense" in Psychological Reports later this year. "This study reviews all the empirical, comparative scientific literature published on the issue of homosexual parenting through 1998. It documents that the empirical findings (irrespective of the opinions or biases of the investigators) line up heavily on the side of 'common sense.' That is, homosexual parents are considerably more apt to have children who engage in homosexuality, children who are hypersexualized, children who have difficulty in peer relationships, et cetera."

Eye LASHES

“Continued female support for quotas directed against white men, including fathers and husbands, and for a right to partial-birth abortions, does not indicate a concern about ‘family values.’ Women as political participants do not express nurturing, domestic personalities. More often they exhibit vindictively egotistical attitudes, which encourage the social left to strike even harder against traditional family structures and against constitutional liberties for white males.”

—Paul Gottfried, in the October 1999 issue of *Triple R*, a monthly newsletter published by the Center for Libertarian Studies, p.13.

HAIKU

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A fascinating map of the political struggles being waged in this country

MOBILIZING RESENTMENT:

Conservative Resurgence from the John Birch Society to the Promise Keepers

(Beacon Press, 1999)

Jean Hardisty

Foreword by Wilma Mankiller, former Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation



“Jean Hardisty’s gift is to remind us that there is no easy way to revitalize a progressive movement in this country. It has to be done person by person, family by family, community by community.”

—Wilma Mankiller, from the Foreword

“Replacing simple condemnation with sober analysis, Mobilizing Resentment raises the troubling question: what can we learn from people we fear?”

—Howard Zinn, author of *A People’s History of the United States*

In this provocative book, Jean Hardisty chronicles the recent history of the right, a history she has often viewed at first hand. She details the formation of right-wing movements opposed to the struggle for expanding the rights of women, people of color, lesbians and gays. Interspersed throughout her analysis are Hardisty’s own experiences as both an activist and observer. She argues that we fail to engage the right with an understanding of its history, paradoxes and ubiquity at our own peril.



Jean Hardisty is a political scientist who, since 1981, has been executive director of Political Research Associates, an independent nonprofit research center that monitors anti-democratic movements and trends. She lives in Somerville, Massachusetts.

“If you have time for only one book about the ultra-conservative resurgence, this is it.”

—Gloria Steinem

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POLITICAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

Resources

Selected Organizations Defending Affirmative Action

Floridians Representing Equity and Equality

1333 West Cass Street, Tampa, FL 33606
727.464.4880

Broad coalition of 30 organizations and individuals organizing to oppose the anti-affirmative action Florida Civil Rights Initiative.



Americans for a Fair Chance

1730 Rhode Island Ave., NW, Suite 303,
Washington, DC 20036 202.822.9267

National consortium working to educate the public about how affirmative action programs and policies benefit everyone. Its *Communications Catalog* is an excellent resource for organizers. It has concise and cogent sections that define affirmative action, provide a comprehensive history of affirmative action, as well as the value and continuing need for affirmative action. The catalog also includes Talking Points, Questions & Answers, Success Stories and Anecdotes.



Californians for Justice

1611 Telegraph Avenue, Suite 206
Oakland, CA 94612
510.452.2728, www.cfj.org

1010 S. Flower Street, Suite 218
Los Angeles, CA 90015
213.747.4495

1010 Ruff Drive
San Jose, CA 95110

State organization founded in response to California's anti-affirmative action proposition 209. Known nationally as a resource for organizers facing similar challenges. Provides sample materials and consulting to counter anti-affirmative action initiatives. Materials and training cover precinct organizing, community education and grassroots fundraising.



Applied Research Center

3781 Broadway, Oakland, CA 94611
510.653.3415, www.arc.org

Public policy, educational, and research institute addressing issues of race and social change. Excellent resources analyzing impact of institutional racism and the need for affirmative action policies. Co-publishes *ColorLines* with the Center for Third World Organizing.

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The Public Eye

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