

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AT WORK

Freshman Seminar FS 46w

Harvard University

Fall 2003

Monday 2-4 p.m.

William James Hall Room 6

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Overview

The Civil Rights Act and presidential orders requiring “affirmative action” in employment are now nearly four decades old. Affirmative action remains a hot political topic, yet the debate is largely uninformed by the social science literature. We will review the origins of Civil Rights and affirmative action laws, employer response to the law, changing public attitudes, and the effects of the law on inequality.

What caused Congress to pass the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and to pass subsequent amendments that expanded protections for women, the disabled, and other groups? The Civil Rights movement played a large role at first, but civil rights laws developed momentum of their own. How have employers responded to the law? While pundits mostly debate the merits of quotas, employment quotas are illegal in most instances. Most employers responded to the law by making the hiring and promotion processes more bureaucratic, in order to make them more meritocratic.

How does the public feel about affirmative action at work? Periodic surveys show that the public – men and women, blacks and whites – supports most of the steps employers take to improve opportunities for minorities and women. How has affirmative action law affected inequality by race and gender? Recent studies show that affirmative action programs are responsible for many of the gains women and minorities have made in the last three decades.

Details

Attendance at our weekly meetings is mandatory. The success of the seminar depends on participants having done the reading in advance. To prepare for the discussion, each student will bring to class a brief précis of the week’s readings and several questions for discussion. There will be two, longer, written assignments during the semester.

Books available for purchase at The COOP:

Kanter, Rosabeth. 1993. Men and Women of the Corporation. Second Edition. New York: Basic.

Nelson, Robert L., and William P. Bridges. 1999. Legalizing Gender Inequality: Courts, Markets, and Unequal Pay for Women in America. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Tomaskovic-Devey, Donald. 1993. Gender and Racial Inequality at Work: The Sources and Consequences of Job Segregation. Ithaca, NY: ILR Press.

Weekly Assignments

Week 1 September 22

THE RIGHTS REVOLUTION

No reading.

Week 2 September 29

ORIGINS OF INEQUALITY

Wilson, William Julius. 1980. The Declining Significance of Race: Blacks and Changing American Institutions. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapters 4 and 5 (62-121).

Baron, James N., and William T. Bielby. 1985. "Organizational Barriers to Gender Equality: Sex Segregation of Jobs and Opportunities." Pp. 233-251 in Gender and the Life Course. Edited by Alice S. Rossi. New York: Aldine.

Reskin, Barbara F. 2000. "The Proximate Causes of Employment Discrimination." Contemporary Sociology 29(2): 319-328.

Bielby, William T. 2000. "Minimizing Workplace Gender and Racial Bias." Contemporary Sociology 29(2): 120-129.

Week 3 October 6

GENDER DISCRIMINATION AT WORK

Kanter, Rosabeth. 1993. Men and Women of the Corporation. Second Edition. New York: Basic.

Week 4 October 20

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IN EDUCATION

Karabel, Jerome. 1984. "Status-Group Struggle, Organizational Interests, and the Limits of Institutional Autonomy: The Transformation of Harvard, Yale, and Princeton, 1918-1940." Theory and Society. 13(1):1-40.

Karabel, Jerome. 1999. "The Rise and Fall of Affirmative Action at the University of California." Journal of Blacks in Higher Education. 25: 109-112.

Bowen, William, and Derek Bok. 1998. The Shape of the River: Long-Term Consequences of Considering Race in College and University Admissions. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapter 1.

Spencer, Steven J., Claude M. Steele, and Diane M. Quinn. 1999. "Stereotype Threat and Women's Math Performance." Journal of Experimental Social Psychology 35: 4-28).

Week 5 October 27

DO PEOPLE CHOOSE BAD JOBS?

Tomaskovic-Devey, Donald. 1993. Gender and Racial Inequality at Work: The Sources and Consequences of Job Segregation. Ithaca, NY: ILR Press.

Week 6 November 3

THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Barbara Reskin. 1998. The Realities of Affirmative Action. Chapter 1 (1-18).

John David Skrentny. 1996. *The Ironies of Affirmative Action: Politics, Culture, and Justice in America*. Chapters 1, 2, and 5 (1-35; 111-144).

Harrison, Cynthia. 1988. On Account of Sex: The Politics of Women's Issues, 1945-1968. Berkeley: University of California Press. Chapters 9 and 10 (169-209).

Chayes, Antonia (1974) "Make Your EEO Program Court-Proof." Harvard Business Review 52(5):81-89.

Schaeffer, Ruth G. 1980 Nondiscrimination in Employment and Beyond. New York: The Conference Board. Pages 1-50.

Week 7 November 10

DID THE EQUAL PAY ACT MATTER?

Nelson, Robert L., and William P. Bridges. 1999. Legalizing Gender Inequality: Courts, Markets, and Unequal Pay for Women in America. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Week 8 November 17

DOES AFFIRMATIVE ACTION MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Leonard, Jonathan. 1989. "Women and Affirmative Action." Journal of Economic Perspectives. 3, 1: 61-75.

Leonard, Jonathan. 1990. "The Impact of Affirmative Action Regulation and Equal Employment Law on Black Employment." Journal of Economic Perspectives 4, 4: 47-63.

Reskin, Barbara. 1993. "Sex Segregation in the Workplace." Annual Review of Sociology 19: 241-70.

Hochschild, Jennifer. 1995. Facing up to the American Dream: Race, Class and the Soul of the Nation. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Chapter 13 (225-249).

Week 9 November 24

IS AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EFFICIENT?

Reder, M.W. 1958. "Review of The Economics of Discrimination." The American Economic Review. 48(3): 495-500.

Stiglitz, Joseph E. 1973. "Approaches to the Economics of Discrimination." The American Economic Review 63(2): 287-295.

D'Amico, Thomas F. 1987. "The Conceit of Labor Market Discrimination." American Economic Review 77(2): 310-315.

Posner, Richard A. 1989. "An Economic Analysis of Sex Discrimination Laws." University of Chicago Law Review 56(4): 1311-1336.

Donohue, John J. III. 1989. "Prohibiting Sex Discrimination in the Workplace: An Economic Perspective." The University of Chicago Law Review 56(4): 1337-1368.

Week 10 December 1

WHAT DOES AMERICA THINK OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION?

Glazer, Nathan. 1987. Affirmative Discrimination: Ethnic Inequality and Public Policy. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Chapter 2.

Hochschild, Jennifer. 1995. Facing up to the American Dream: Race, Class and the Soul of the Nation. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Chapters 3 and 4 (55-88).

Steeh, Charlotte and Maria Krysan. 1996. "The Polls – Trends: Affirmative Action and the Public, 1970-1995." Public Opinion Quarterly 60: 128-158.

Bobo, Lawrence, and James R. Kluegel. 1993. "Opposition to Race-Targeting: Self-Interest, Stratification Ideology, or Racial Attitudes." American Sociological Review 58(4):443-464.

Week 11 December 8

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND WORK/FAMILY MATTERS

Higginbotham, A. Leon, Jr. 1992. "An Open Letter to Justice Clarence Thomas from a Federal Judicial Colleague." Pp. 3-39 in Race-ing Justice, En-Gendering Power: Essays on Anita Hill, Clarence Thomas, and the Construction of Social Reality. Edited by Toni Morrison. New York: Pantheon.

Farrell, John A. 1999. "Rewriting the Rules." The Boston Globe February 7, page 17.

Kelly, Erin and Frank Dobbin. 1999. "Civil Rights Law at Work: Sex Discrimination and the Rise of Maternity Leave Policies." American Journal of Sociology. 105:455-492.

Jackson, Robert Max. 1998. Destined for Equality: The Inevitable Rise of Women's Status. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Chapter 3. Pp. 71-124.

Week 12 December 15

DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT AND THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Johnston, William B. and Arnold E. Packer et al. 1987. Workforce 2000: Work and Workers for the 21st Century. Indianapolis: The Hudson Institute. Executive Summary and Chapters 3 and 4 (xiii-xxvii, 75-117).

Wheeler, Michael. 1994. Diversity Training: A Research Report. New York: The Conference Board. Pages 1-45.

Miller, Joanne. 1994. "Corporate Responses to Diversity." New York: Center for the New American Workforce. Queens College. Pages 1-23.

Kelly, Erin and Frank Dobbin. 1998. "How Affirmative Action Became Diversity Management." American Behavioral Scientist 41: 960-984.

Gutman, Arthur. 1993. EEO Law and Personnel Practices. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications. Chapter 8 (288-346).