

Affirmative action: discussion and ethics essay example

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Affirmative Action: Issues

“ Affirmative action” is a double-barreled initiative inclusive of the “ right of all persons to be accorded full and equal consideration on the basis of merit” and an agenda of aggressively hiring and furthering able individuals in protected sectors such as wounded veterans, ethnic minorities and women.” The policy was centered on employment and education, and the objectives that were established were designed to take forceful measures, in the tenets of non-prejudice, to guarantee that marginalized groups that had generally been the subject of mistreatment would be given the same opportunities as the “ whites” in the society.

The reason of affirmative action declares that where a specific criterion of excellence, even though it is an unforeseen and unwarranted, works to marginalize minorities, the load is on the infringing agency or group to uphold the policy in proportion to the restricting nature of the policy. The center on “ criteria-fixed” values in the United States does away with the notion that every individual in the United States are not entitled equal access to private education institutions, SAT preparatory schemes, and resume consultants.

American theorist and constitutional law analyst Ronald Dworkin repudiates this argument on the basis of two factors. One, Dworkin argues that “ merit” cannot be defined in a general manner, but is heavily dependent on the characteristics of a person that will make the person socially relevant to the mission of a university. The aspect of school admission statement where they are not free to set whatever they want and it has to have the primary objective of education. By not strictly setting the academic goal, it could

question the definition of education. It should repudiate this argument on the basis that affirmative action is not any more discriminatory than a typical entrance requirement that colleges use. For example, a school with a good debate program would prefer those with good oratorical skills, while a school with a strong athletic program would prefer exceptional athletes. Higher education must set their primary objective to provide education. If the admission statement is not strictly setting the academic goal, it could question the definition of education.

In this light, no candidate is given the right to compel a university to define its obligation to the standards of the candidate. To Dworkin, the school is at liberty to set its own benchmarks and establish its own admission policies. However, if Dworkin is right, then the racially charged admission policies that denied admission to African Americans was right, and did not need to be displaced. In addition, Dworkin's argument is flawed in that it actually discriminates against those who apply to universities on the basis of merit or academics alone. This runs in opposition to Kant's "categorical imperative" that people must treat all people as "ends in themselves, and never only as a means to the ends of others."

At the heart of the affirmative action debate is a conflict on the issue of justice. In assessing the judiciousness of a social initiative, one starts with a fundamental premise that all people must be accorded equal treatment unless there is a conscientiously significant reason to look upon differently. The moral dictates in society is that whatever benefits and responsibilities that must be bore, the tenets of justice mandates that these be distributed equally.

Much of the debate on the issues regarding affirmative action and race; however, the issue has also been framed in the contexts of women and ethnic minorities. Many people are in accord that the issue of bondage and the “ Jim Crow” legacy in the United States contravened the initial assumption of justice. To judge a man on the sole basis of the color of a man’s skin cannot be a justifiable factor to look on people in a biased manner.

Dworkin believe that racial exclusion from segregation era depended on the “ despicable idea that one race may be inherently more worthy than another”. Whereas affirmation actions eliminates prejudice and promotes diversity in job fields. While we advocate the importance of diversity, if a student that lacks the formal skill that its peer of opposite color contains, it would not seem adequate to admit that student into a higher education institution. It is the quality, rather than race or gender that counts.

Dworkin concedes though that a “ white” applicant to a university with average scores will stand a greater chance at being admitted if the applicant were from a racial or ethnic minority. Further examination of Dworkin’s position further exposes the deficiency of his argument, that the applicant will still be accepted, if the applicant had better grades or examination scores. In the final argument, the advocacy of Dworkin on the strengths of affirmative action, that factors not within the control of the person must be given preference, is not that different from intelligence, in that intelligence as a factor in admissions must be the same as the color of one’s skin.

Bibliography

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