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## Affirmative Action vs. Reverse Discrimination

*As long as prejudice exists in America, minorities and women are at risk of discrimination*



Cyndee Mady  
Opinion Editor

In an attempt to liberate minorities and women, Former President Lyndon B. Johnson introduced affirmative action as "a more profound stage of the battle for civil rights." Though we have advanced into the millennium we have not necessarily progressed in attitudes regarding gender and racial equality. Whether or not one wants to admit it, prejudice still exists.

Barbara Grutter and Jennifer Gratz are white students who claim affirmative action directly affected their denied admission into the University of Michigan Law School. They are attempting to eliminate racial consideration in the university's undergraduate and law school admissions process.

Students at Michigan State University have jumped on the bandwagon, attending rallies against affirmative action and waving signs in the air that read, "Affirmative Action is State Sponsored Racism."

But not all students agree with this message. "The nation still needs a tool to make sure that people aren't left out. Not just black people, but people of all races and sexual orientation, because there is still such a thing as white privilege," said Lee June, vice president for student affairs.

Microbiology major Kyeorda Kemp recognizes the disproportion of equality in our society. "On average, women make 74 cents to every dollar that a man makes. That should show you that there is a problem," Kemp said.

All "men" may have been created equal, but they have not all benefited from equal treatment. This court battle in itself expresses the inequalities our society has suffered. The fact that two white people can cause a national upheaval when whole races are in jeopardy of regressing back to the mentality of segregation, is a blatant display of injustice.

Historian Roger Wilkins pointed out, "blacks have a 375-year history on this continent: 245 involving slavery, 100 involving legalized discrimination, and only 30 involving anything else." A mere 30 years does not make up for centuries of oppression, nor does it erase the ongoing issue of discrimination.

It would be nice to live in a world where one could trust that the honorable and fair decision would always prevail, but unfortunately that is not the world we live in. Unless laws are upheld to indemnify egalitarianism, the repressed ways of the past will rapidly resume its reign.

Without guidelines in place to insure that opportunities remain available to women and racial minorities, the foundation we have earnestly strived to build upon these past decades will crumble to the ground as if it had never existed at all.

*People's accomplishments, not the color of their skin, should determine their position in society*



Frank Jordan  
Staff Writer

Hard work and a few breaks along the way should determine a person's lot in life, not a governmentally backed program that is terribly out of date.

Affirmative action is not dead, but the wording should be reworked to give everyone a chance in his or her pursuit of life, liberty and happiness in the greatest country in the world.

A recent court case involving two University of Michigan students who sued the law school over admissions

practices has brought one of the most groundbreaking yet controversial subjects back into the spotlight.

Affirmative action rose out of the ashes of the civil rights movement in the 1960s and gave enormous opportunities to people of color. An equal playing field in all phases of American life is what minorities and women hoped to gain from this bold action. Affirmative action has meant a lot to many people, but some people are not happy with the outcome.

White males have been told that they are the reason for affirmative action, yet the same white males who are struggling to make it in our country will tell you that they are not to blame for everyone's problems.

All anyone wants is a chance to prove their worth, whether in the classroom or on the job. All people should be given the same chance, regardless of the color of their skin or their sex.

Minorities will tell you that this is all what they want as well, but when special privileges are given to those in a minority status, the playing field just got uneven.

Diversity is a big word thrown around all over the country nowadays, from our workplaces to our classrooms. True diversity comes from within, not from a piece of paper.

Some minorities also say that affirmative action is not the best idea because others will look at their accomplishments as a result of a government program, not because of their own hard work and sacrifice, and it should not be that way.

If two people are vying for the same job or the same position in an academic setting, such as admission to a school or a school's program, should their accomplishments weigh more heavily than the color of their skin, the country of their birth or their sex? Of course they should.

Under the current affirmative action laws, this is not the case. The laws need to be rewritten in order to give all Americans equal opportunities.

## 'Cross-generfication' may be our only hope for social evolution



Shadra Beesley  
Editor-in-Chief/  
Copy Editor

like "Death Cab for Cutie" and phrases like "I'm sad" is to someday meet a boy wearing black, thick-framed glasses, Converse sneakers and a jacket with band names like "The Juliana Theory" and phrases like "I have angst" at a "Dashboard Confessional" concert.

But what then? Everybody meets her Knight in Shining Iron Thrift Store T-shirt or his Lady in Animal Print Hair Dye, then commits for life in a non-traditional way to someone within his or her musical preference category, and carefully decides (based on current overpopulation statistics) to have children. Now we have emo parents raising depressed, angst-filled kids, indie rock parents raising anti-institution kids, and punks raising punk kids.

Maybe a little cross-generfication might do us all a little good. Say an emo guy marries a punk girl. You get kids who will fight authority figures tooth and nail but then fall in love with said authority figures and aren't ashamed to cry and threaten suicide because they can't be with the one they love due to the fact that they burned down a building that belonged to the one they love.

Okay, maybe not.

Perhaps the further evolution of the planetary social classification system will take care of this problem. I long for the day when people are categorized by preferred food type and I get to say things like "that guy is so Thai food," or "she's gone totally Hostess."

The social classification system on this planet seems to be evolving.

In high school people were always conveniently categorized by the activities they participated in. Drama freaks, band nerds, jocks, cheerleaders, stoners, Klingons; everybody fit into a neat little compartment.

In college the code seems to have changed. Now that we're Big Kids we seem to be categorized by musical genre, as in "that girl is sooo emo," "they look really indie rock" or "that's not very gangster," which I'm assuming is a reference to playing '30s records on the victrola. People chose their hangouts, clothes and personalities according to whether they prefer lyric-driven acoustic numbers or ear-splitting unintelligible vocals backed by frantic percussion.

The logical explanation for this classification system is that it makes it easier to meet people who you have things in common with. I mean, I think the hope of a girl who wakes up in the morning, puts on a pair of black, thick-framed glasses, Converse sneakers and a cardigan covered in buttons with band names

## Embedded journalists capture, report the brutal truth; can you handle it?

Cyndee Mady  
Opinion Editor

The war with Iraq has had journalists embedded on the front lines of combat, often endangering - or in many cases, losing - their lives for the cause.

These correspondents may not have known the full impact of what they were getting into, but should be commended for their bravery and dedication.

As recent as the Gulf War of 1997, the press had no control over the dissemination of information they would receive from government officials. Whatever picture the government wanted painted was the picture that would be conveyed to the public through news sources.

Many of the puzzle pieces were missing or perhaps even displayed out of context. Reporters had to rely on inside anonymous sources if they were to capture the essence of a story, rather than simply relying on what had been hand picked.

The fact that there have been hun-

dreds of reporters in Iraq to cover the war firsthand is an important step into the 21st century.

It is crucial to report all aspects of the war, no matter how brutal. After all, we're talking about war here, not a picnic in the park.

Now that journalists are on the forefront of the battlefield in Iraq, it is their responsibility to inform the public about what they are witnessing, including U.S., British and civilian casualties.

This brings up the debate on whether images may be too shocking for Americans to absorb. If one reads the newspaper every day because one wants to be well-informed on current events, then one should be prepared for the cold hard truths. If that means viewing offensive images that may make the hairs on the back of your neck stand at attention, then so be it.

On March 28 USA Today printed a picture of dead Iraqi soldiers on their front page prompting 60 disturbed readers to inundate phone lines

with complaints. Many of the readers wanted to know why an "inside photo of a U.S. soldier walking with several smiling Iraqi children" could not have replaced their choice.

"We looked at both photos," recalled USA Today Executive Editor Brian Gallagher. "One showed a bloody scene, and the other was very benign. Given the bloodshed that day, we did not think it was very responsible to show the more benign photo."

Kudos, Mr. Gallagher, for making a judgment call that does not necessarily reflect popular opinion, but does reflect the reality at hand no matter how unconscionable.

These images are real and the public has a right to see the truth without the camouflage of discretion.

Maybe the news should come with a warning: Content may be unsuitable for children, the faint at heart and immature, ignorant adults who choose to live in a cave sheltered from the real world.

Consider yourselves warned!

Do you have something to shout about?  
Letters to the editor are always welcome.

Drop letters by B-104 or send to  
cccprint@clackamas.edu

