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### Author

Citrin, Jack

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**Jack Citrin**  
**University of California, Berkeley**

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## Affirmative Action in the People's Court

Jack Citrin  
University of California, Berkeley

Working Paper 95-16

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The 1996 elections promise a referendum on how to deal with the problems of racial and ethnic diversity. The passage of Proposition 187 in California already has prompted immigration reform, including proposals to lower the level of legal immigration and revise the family reunification preferences that helped change the ethnic profile of the United States. Now the California Civil Rights Initiative (CCRI) has pierced the cocoon of establishment support protecting the development of affirmative action programs from the judgment of mass opinion. With presidential ambitions at stake and partisan battle lines drawn, it seems clear that voters will shape the future of the preferential treatment programs for minorities and women so deeply embedded in the behavior of our public and private institutions.

Since the meaning of affirmative action and how to implement it were controversial and polarizing issues from the beginning, the timing of the electoral assault on minority set-asides, special programs in college admissions, and race or gender-based hiring needs explanation. This "why now" question might just as well be posed as "why only now?" This essay reviews trends in the level, intensity, and social bases of mass opinions about affirmative action, finds little change, and concludes that shifting incentives for competing elites were critical in pushing the issue to the top of the agenda.

Stability in citizens' evaluations of affirmative action has coexisted with significant changes in both the content of the policy itself and the official justifications for it. As more and more groups gained inclusion as beneficiaries of programs affecting the allocation of more and more benefits, affirmative action slipped its original moral moorings. No longer framed exclusively as remedial action required to make up for past or present discrimination, the policy increasingly describes behavior designed simply to "represent" diversity.

Reviewing these developments, the historian Hugh Davis Graham has argued that the paradox of affirmative action is that success has undermined its legitimacy and complicated the task of crafting civil rights policies that enjoy broad support.

#### Affirmative Action and Multiculturalism

Immigration and affirmative action are issues spawned by the interplay of demographic change and the rise of ethnic consciousness. Immigration and affirmative action policies are yoked by the impact of current regulations entitling black, Hispanic, and Asian immigrants to qualify immediately for preferential treatment in a variety of programs. This helps tie affirmative action to the explosive issue of multiculturalism and places the issue squarely into the ongoing conflict between two visions of the American political community.

At one ideological pole, cosmopolitan liberalism conceives of the United States as a community of autonomous individuals. Anyone can belong to America and get ahead provided he or she assimilates, both linguistically and in terms of endorsing the national creed of individualism and democracy. In the political realm, cosmopolitan liberalism stresses the shared rights of citizens qua individuals, equality of opportunity, and the maintenance of minority cultures, if at all, through the effort of private institutions.

Multiculturalism, by contrast, construes racial or ethnic group membership as the primary or preferred source of one's political identity and interests. From this perspective, America becomes, in Horace Kallen's phrase, a confederation of several, equally worthy cultures or nationalities. Accordingly, multiculturalism promotes group rights, government action to secure equality of outcomes, and official recognition for minority languages and cultures.

When it comes to affirmative action, cosmopolitan liberalism goes little

further than firm enforcement of the principle of anti-discrimination. Multiculturalism endorses group representation based on numerical strength; its guiding principle is that ethnicity should govern the allocation of important goods, both tangible and symbolic.

A variety of national and California surveys designed by David Sears and myself indicates that there is a significant gulf between the staying power of cosmopolitan liberalism among the mass public and the drift toward multicultural norms evident in the policies of public agencies and elite institutions. For example, most citizens continue to embrace the image of the melting pot that many public intellectuals and activists now scorn as not only fraudulent but oppressive. And while few voters will deduce their policy preferences or choice of a candidate from a theory of nationalism, one's conception of civic identity does function as a symbolic sounding-board against which political arguments resonate and can act as a cultural obstacle for certain policies.

A survey conducted by the National Opinion Research Center in 1994 underscores this point. Within a national sample, 42 per cent of all respondents, and 47 per cent of the whites, favored a constitutional amendment to designate English as the nation's official language, advocated reducing the level of legal immigration, and opposed giving blacks preferences in hiring and promotion "because of past discrimination." By contrast, the bloc taking the "multicultural" side on all three issues was tiny, comprising 5 per cent of the entire sample and just 3 per cent of the white respondents. This small group was almost entirely made up of self-identified liberals with post-graduate degrees. As this clustering of opinion implies, the social coalition that voted for the initiative to deny aid to illegal immigrants also approves of the coming initiative to ban California's preferential treatment programs.

### Framing Affirmative Action

Affirmative action is a notoriously vague term. Its advocates define it as overcoming barriers to opportunity for deserving minorities, its detractors as a system of preferences that violate the merit principle. This chronic semantic conflict suggests that how affirmative action is symbolically framed or labeled is a vital element in the battle for public opinion.

Harvard Law Professor Randall Kennedy has defined affirmative action as "policies that provide preferences based explicitly on membership in a designated group." Such policies range from "soft" forms such as target outreach, job training, or education programs that seek to enhance opportunities to "hard" forms that push for equal outcomes through formal preferences that might include reserving a specific number of openings for members of particular groups. In either form, affirmative action is a policy of redistribution aiming at a different and purportedly fairer division of jobs, places in universities, government contracts, or radio and television licenses than would be achieved *ceteris paribus*.

Both the perceived "hardness" and the stated rationale for a specific affirmative action program influence the level of public approval. Affirmative action policies are often justified as compensation for past harm. This is a shaky logical foundation, since the beneficiaries of preferential treatment usually are not the actual victims of discrimination and those who pay the costs include innocent parties. And immigrants entitled to affirmative action under current law are neither the victims of past discrimination in the United States nor the descendants of such victims. Indeed, even in the case of blacks, the Supreme Court has rejected preferential hiring policies introduced to compensate for the continuing harms caused by a history of "societal" discrimination.

Recognizing that compensation is an inadequate rationale for the numerous existing programs that are both voluntary and far from "narrowly tailored," supporters have turned to a utilitarian logic of justification. As the political scientist Laura Stoker has explained, this mode of reasoning looks forward at the consequences of affirmative action rather than backward at a history of prior discrimination. Deviation from the norm of equal treatment of individuals is acceptable, it then can be asserted, because the group preferences in question have a positive net effect on societal welfare.

The utilitarian rationale for affirmative action elevates the goal of "diversity" to a transcendent status. From this perspective, diversity in all social institutions will bring a stream of benefits--speeding the assimilation of disadvantaged minorities into the American mainstream, improving the medical and legal services provided to minority communities, reducing ethnic tensions and the danger of urban violence, providing role models that boost the self-esteem young women and minorities, enhancing the quality of a college education by exposing students to new perspectives on literature and history and by teaching them how to adapt to people of different cultures--at little ~~risk to common~~ standards of excellence, economic productivity, the stigmatization of affirmative action's beneficiaries, or ethnic separatism.

The scarcity of firm evidence concerning the long-run consequences of affirmative action means that the heated debate on the issue is occurring in a largely fact-free environment. Clearly, though, the instrumental value of protected group status guarantees that new claimants for this designation will emerge. And since there is no obvious way of deciding when sufficient diversity has been achieved, the tendency to converge on proportional representation as the standard of success seems inexorable.



### The Structure of Public Opinion

Despite a long history of polling about affirmative action, trend data is scarce and there are just specks of information concerning approval of programs targeted at groups other than blacks, including women. In addition, survey questions frequently do not accurately mimic the ongoing political and legal arguments about affirmative action and thus fail to assess reactions to specific justifications or criticisms.

These caveats aside, it is clear that over a period of forty years, the widespread acceptance of segregation and racial discrimination among white Americans has given way to massive support for the general principles of integration and equality of treatment. When it comes to specific affirmative action proposals, however, the summary of data published by Seymour Martin Lipset and William Schneider in 1978 revealed a mixed pattern of opinion. While most whites were willing to support "compensatory" policies such as special training programs and other interventions aimed at improving the skills and thus the opportunities of blacks, a large majority consistently rejected preferences or procedures that favored "less qualified" blacks over whites. Antagonism toward preferential treatment prevailed even when survey questions explicitly referred to the need to make up for past discrimination. After more than a decade of additional national experience with affirmative action, the structure of public opinion remained largely unchanged. Lipset reported in 1992 that tolerance for programs aimed at enhancing the resources of minorities still coexisted with the belief that "ability" alone should be used in hiring or promotion and with hostility toward anything that raised the specter of a "quota." Now, as earlier, the racial divide in opinion is wider when the public is asked about "hard" rather than "soft" forms of affirmative action.

This suggests that the public is unlikely to sympathize with the growing tendency to conceive of affirmative action as representation rather than compensation. Along these lines, a 1993 national survey conducted by Laura Stoker found that the proportion of respondents willing to require that large companies hire a "certain number" of blacks to make up for past discrimination was 45 per cent. Yet even fewer, 25 per cent, approved of preferential hiring as a response to the "under-representation" of blacks among the company's employees. Widespread antipathy to the idea of achieving diversity through formal preferences also emerged in a 1994 National Opinion Research Survey. This study found that less than 10 per cent of the public agreed that the ethnic composition of members of Congress should match that of the general population or that the ethnicity of teachers as a group should resemble that of their students.

With the public opposed both to racial discrimination and to racial preferences, the politically relevant question is how voters interpret the meaning of affirmative action. A *Los Angeles Times* Survey conducted in March 1995 found that 54 per cent of the respondents in a national sample believed that affirmative action results in quotas "always" or "a lot." A *Newsweek* Poll of similar vintage indicated that the proportions of the public who thought of affirmative action as "setting quotas" and "increasing outreach efforts" were roughly comparable. However, by a margin of 46 to 23 per cent, respondents in this survey named reverse discrimination against whites due to affirmative action as a "bigger problem" than racial discrimination against blacks.

In sum, with the issue framed as a choice between group equality and individual merit, affirmative action loses at the polls. Understandably, therefore, those opposing the California initiative emphasize the dangers it poses to the ability to root out persisting discrimination and to the survival

of the relatively popular opportunity enhancement programs, while sponsors of the measure strive to allay such concerns.

Although generally critical of affirmative action, Nathan Glazer has outlined both moral and practical reasons for a compromise that limits preferential treatment to blacks alone. Political support for such a return to the policy's original intent, however, is doubtful. It is a sobering fact that despite the distinctive legacy of slavery and Jim Crow and the greater number and severity of the obstacles faced by blacks today, the public seems unwilling to give this special consideration and resists the idea of formalized preferences regardless of the particular group they are intended to assist. A January 1995 California Poll conducted by the Field Institute found that by roughly a margin of two to one respondents disapproved of reserving jobs or places in colleges for either blacks, women, Hispanics, or Asians. (See Table 1). In this context, mobilizing a coalition of beneficiary groups is the strategic choice for opponents of CCRI.

#### Myths about Trends

The abrupt emergence of affirmative action as an election issue prompted many pundits to assume a groundswell of new opposition, principally among white males angered by economic stagnation and cultural displacement. The facts are more prosaic. Affirmative action policy is a classic product of American pluralism. For twenty years, an intense, well-organized minority with powerful allies in Congress and the federal bureaucracy has held its ground in a tug of war with a large, diffuse majority. One illustration of the stable distribution of public opinion is Gallup's finding that in numerous polls conducted between 1977 and 1990, more than 80 per cent of a national sample consistently chose "ability as determined by test scores" over "preferential treatment to make up for past

discrimination" as the main criterion in getting jobs and places in college.

The best evidence about recent trends in national opinion about affirmative action comes from biennial surveys conducted by the American National Election Studies (ANES) between 1986 and 1994. (See Table 2). Against the backdrop of stability in outlook and strong majority opposition to race-conscious preferences in both hiring and promotion and in college admissions, there has been just a glacial rise in disapproval of affirmative action over the past decade. In addition, rejection of "preferences" in hiring consistently is more widespread than disagreement with "quotas" in college admissions, probably because jobs and promotions are considered earned outcomes whereas a place at a university is more readily viewed as an initial opportunity.

Affirmative action policy is unusual in that the heated nature of the debate among elites is paralleled by the intensity of mass opinion. The new salience of the policy, however, is not a function of a dramatic rise in the fervor of popular feeling. A large majority of respondents on both sides of the question consistently have said that they are familiar with affirmative action and that their views are "strong." Intense opinions typically express genuine attitudes and fundamental values and thus are less malleable. Recent polls indicate high levels of awareness and opinionation with regard to the proposed initiative in California, suggesting that current attitudes may be resistant to manipulation or persuasion through a media-driven campaign.

The small shift toward increased disapproval of affirmative action in hiring is an across-the-board phenomenon. That is, as Table 2 shows, men and women, blacks, Hispanics, and whites, Democrats, Independents, and Republicans all moved in the same direction, if at all. The racial polarization in opinion on affirmative action is clear, but the divide between blacks and whites did not

widen between 1986 and 1994.

Democrats predictably are more likely to support affirmative action than Republicans. Much more striking than this persistent difference between partisan identifiers, however, is the pervasive antagonism to race-conscious policies among white Democrats. In 1994, for example, fully 83 per cent of this group disapproved of preferences in hiring. This starkly demonstrates President Clinton's electoral dilemma: fighting to preserve affirmative action helps to keep the trust of black voters, but risks losing the white Democrats whose earlier defections elected Ronald Reagan and George Bush.

Although defenders of affirmative action repeatedly warn white women that they comprise the largest group of beneficiaries, gender differences in opinion about preferential treatment are puny. Indeed, Table 2 suggests that differences between white males and females have, if anything, diminished over time. In 1986, 66 per cent of the white male respondents in the ANES survey were strongly opposed to race-conscious preferences in hiring, compared to 58 per cent of the white females; in 1994, the corresponding figures were 70 per cent and 67 per cent.

Table 3 indicates that the views of white men and women regarding gender rather than race-conscious policies also are very similar. The proposed California Civil Rights Initiative explicitly prohibits preferential treatment based on gender. A May 1995 California Poll conducted by the Field Institute found that 67 per cent of white male respondents compared to 59 per cent of white women said they favored the measure, a gap that barely attains statistical significance.

Female respondents in this survey were more likely than men to say that discrimination against women still exists in California and to believe that

"women losing out because of discrimination" was a greater concern than "men losing out because of affirmative action." Nevertheless, when asked if the gender of two applicants for a job or promotion should be weighed in the selection process when they possess "about equal qualifications," 89 per cent of the white men and 84 per cent of the white women said no, indicating a pervasive discomfort among both groups with even a weak version of Justice Powell's decisive opinion in the *Bakke* case.

The evidence of the polls reveals the hollowness of the claims that the current assault on affirmative action is due to the anger of white males frustrated by falling wages. Clearly, public opinion has strongly opposed preferential treatment in hiring and college admissions for many years, in both good times and bad. If anything, the small uptick in disapproval of affirmative action between 1992 and 1994 coincided with improving economic conditions. Moreover, white women are nearly as opposed as men to preferential hiring, even though their wages have been rising for the past two decades. In the 1994 ANES survey, the group comprised by the prototype of the angry white male--middle-aged, high school-educated, and working-class--was indeed hostile to affirmative action, but no more so than all other white male respondents. Indeed, there was no connection between attitudes of white men toward race-conscious preferences in hiring and either their employment status, whether their personal financial circumstances were improving or declining, or whether they were optimistic or pessimistic about their economic futures.

#### Explaining Public Opinion

Recent research concerning the underpinnings of attitudes toward affirmative action has centered on the relative importance of four main motives:

1. Self-interest, defined broadly as the perceived impact of a policy on both

one's own well-being and on the wealth, status, and power of one's ethnic or gender group; 2. Individualist values, in the sense of how strongly one is committed to a notion of equity that defines fair treatment as rewarding people on the basis of individual merit rather than social background; 3. Beliefs about the causes of racial inequality as due to personal causes such as a lack of motivation or ability rather than to structural discrimination; and 4. Sheer prejudice, that is, hostility to a particular group whose members are stereotyped as lacking requisite skills or character traits.

Each of these potential sources of opinion fuels opposition to the "hard" forms of affirmative action that entail preferences for designated groups without necessarily causing disapproval of the "softer" compensatory programs. Policies that enhance opportunities for blacks do not affect the self-interest of whites as directly as "goals" or "quotas" because they simply help people to compete rather than predetermine the outcome of the competition. Some examples of affirmative action, such as outreach and training programs, also are consistent with individualist values, for they help people help themselves to achieve parity. These programs may be acceptable to those who believe that current inequalities are the result of a lack of motivation among disadvantaged groups because they encourage effort and reward motivation. Finally, as the sociologists James Kluegel and Lawrence Bobo have argued, even a racially prejudiced individual may tolerate a targeted policy that enhances opportunity because such a program would screen out the unable and undeserving while permitting the special person, the exception to the rule, to get ahead.

With the possible exception of growing racial tolerance, there is no evidence that recent trends are eroding the motivational foundations of opposition to affirmative action. Indeed, as policy moves from the construction

of narrowly tailored remedies to overcome discrimination to the self-conscious promotion of diversity and proportional representation, the losses of unprotected groups grow and whites have a stronger reason to reject affirmative action on the grounds of self-interest alone.

The staying power of the individual ethos in America is clear and continues to undergird the pervasive rejection of quotas and group representation, even to make up for past discrimination. The General Social Survey and ANES polls conducted between 1977 and 1992 show that about two-thirds of whites in national samples continue to believe that a lack of motivation among blacks is an important cause of their disadvantaged status. Indeed, the fact that entrenched affirmative action programs have failed to substantially reduce racial differences in economic and educational attainments may bolster the tendency to reject structural explanations for inequality.

#### New Directions

For many years, the white establishment embraced affirmative action and downplayed the moral costs of deviation from color-blind principles. Reverse discrimination first was justified as a temporary expedient for overcoming the ongoing effects of discrimination and later as the instrument for achieving diversity. The general public also condemned racism, but remained convinced that "two wrongs don't make a right." In sum, the majority verdict of the People's Court on affirmative action still echoes Justice O'Connor's opinion in the *Adarand* case: rights belong to persons, not groups.

The gulf between official policy and mass attitudes meant there always was a political incentive to attack affirmative action. What triggered the present movement was the 1994 elections. The example of Proposition 187 in California augured success for another "populist" attack on a "liberal" policy that divided



key Democratic constituencies. The outcome of the congressional races signalled the unpopularity of a President committed to diversity and marked the ascendancy of conservative Republicans willing to aim anti-government sentiment against the regulatory apparatus that sustains affirmative action.

Whatever the outcome of the 1996 elections, the future of affirmative action policy seems destined to change. The Clinton administration is reviewing existing policies to see which "work" and congressional proposals to limit or abolish the use of group preferences abound. The Supreme Court's restrictive ruling concerning the constitutionality of minority set-asides may prove harder to circumvent than the murky and porous *Bakke* decision. Indeed, the Court may soon revisit the arguments in *Bakke* and decide them differently.

Is it possible to construct an affirmative action policy that enjoys broad popular support? Most Americans want both an integrated society, entailing more upward mobility for disadvantaged groups, principally blacks, and justice for individuals, requiring the allocation of life chances on meritocratic grounds. The task of reconciling these values is complicated by disagreement about the success of preferential treatment programs in improving the conditions of minorities and by the uncertain relevance of past experience for future progress now that legal discrimination is banned and dedication to diversity is widespread in corporate and academic circles.

If the reform of affirmative action policy is to be guided by the opinions of the American public, one goal should be strengthening the cosmopolitan liberal conception of the American polity that rests on the principle of equal treatment. This involves the elimination of group preferences; however, strict anti-discrimination laws would remain in effect and provide a remedy for the actual victims of bias.

Such an approach rejects the idea that a need to represent diversity, be it racial, cultural, or sexual, is an acceptable rationale for affirmative action and elevates the role of competence as a criterion in the selection process. In the abstract, variety may be the spice of life, but in a functioning firm, government agency, or university, the value of diversity depends on the nature of the specific task and how members of particular groups relate to each other.

The argument that a person's race, ethnicity, or gender is a qualification per se undermines the application of common standards of performance to the allocation of rewards. As Donald Horowitz has explained in Ethnic Groups in Conflict, affirmative action in the name of diversity yields an enduring order of ethnic entitlements. Rather than promoting integration, such a policy generally encourages protected groups to insist on their cultural uniqueness in order maintain their share of what George Will has mocked as an ethnic spoils system. An ideological commitment to diversity for its own sake thus devalues what Americans hold in common and invites a nativist or racist reaction.

The abandonment of group preferences means that all hiring, promotion, or admissions decisions are made from the pool of qualified applicants. The threshold for entry into this pool, of course, will affect the composition of its members and often is a matter of controversy since the definition of merit can be manipulated in order to include or exclude members of particular groups. Clearly, qualifications should be realistically linked to the task at hand, and past achievement usually is a valid predictor of current performance.

The public clearly prefers the evaluation of relevant credentials to be color-blind. For example, universities may go beyond test scores and grades to assess the tenacity, creativity, and motivation of applicants, if these are deemed important predictors of academic and professional success, but the

measures of these psychological strengths must be applied neutrally to members of all groups.

Once one insists on selection procedures that treat members of the pool of qualified applicants equally, the purpose of affirmative action becomes increasing the number of disadvantaged minorities in the pool. This calls for an aggressive and targeted set of programs ranging from outreach and recruitment to training and education. Such programs should concentrate on those who now are likely to be excluded or ignored, namely blacks.

Once the pool of qualified applicants is known, fair treatment does not necessitate a ritualistic march from the top-rated candidate to the last available slot. A commitment to the priority of competence is perfectly compatible with the use of a lottery in the allocation of positions, contracts, or licenses. The institution I know best, the University of California, Berkeley, could easily replace the arcane Social Diversity Index used in the undergraduate admissions process to meet ethnic "targets" with a lottery to choose all, half, or some intermediate proportion of the incoming class.

A full-fledged lottery would result in a student body whose ethnic and gender mix would replicate that of the qualified pool, subject of course to sampling error. Everyone admitted would be competent according to the criteria established by the institution itself. Minority students could not be stigmatized as less deserving: randomization is the great equalizer. Moreover, a lottery probably would result in the admission of more white students from less privileged backgrounds, the principal victims of reverse discrimination. It would force some of the "top" students to go elsewhere, thus producing more horizontal equality across campuses. Finally, a lottery would free up the time of admissions officers and affirmative action monitors to engage in a more important program of research

to determine which tests and qualities actually predict academic success.

Clearly, a lottery is a more appropriate instrument for providing initial opportunities, as in the admissions or hiring process than in determining final outcomes, as in certification or promotion. Nor would one recommend a lottery when choosing a neurosurgeon or astronaut. There are contexts, such as neurosurgery, in which excellence rather than either competence or diversity should be controlling.

In a perceptive essay in the June 11, 1995 *New York Times Magazine*, Nicholas Lemann warned that affirmative action symbolizes the nation's commitment to redressing a historic wrong and that to abandon preferential treatment would further estrange black citizens and heighten racial tensions. Yet it is just as plausible to argue that affirmative action is contributing to the fraying of ethnic relations without helping the neediest segments of the black community.

To expect affirmative action to eradicate racial inequality is much like believing that the elimination of violence from children's television programs will significantly reduce crime. No single policy can do so much. Tax, welfare, and education policies are the appropriate weapons for attacking the economic disadvantages and family circumstances that have slowed the entry of blacks into the professional and managerial classes. Those who call for the abolition of preferential treatment need to support the expensive policies for creating jobs and improving the education of the disadvantaged. No discrimination, equal opportunity, and assimilation remain the unifying symbols for this diverse nation.

TABLE 1

PUBLIC OPINION ABOUT AFFIRMATIVE ACTION FOR DIFFERENT GROUPS\*

Disapproval of granting preferences in hiring and promotion for:			
<u>Blacks</u>	<u>Women</u>	<u>Hispanics</u>	<u>Asians</u>
60%	57%	61%	61%
Disapproval of reserving openings in colleges and universities for:			
<u>Blacks</u>	<u>Women</u>	<u>Hispanics</u>	<u>Asians</u>
56%	58%	57%	62%

\* Source: California Poll by the Field Institute. January 1995, n = 1000.

TABLE 2

## TRENDS IN PUBLIC OPINION ON AFFIRMATIVE ACTION, 1986-1994

"Some people say that because of past discrimination, blacks should be given preference in hiring and promotion. Others say that such preference in hiring and promotion of blacks is wrong because it gives blacks advantages they haven't earned. / What about your opinion--are you for or against preferential hiring and promotion of blacks?/ Do you (favor/oppose) preference in hiring and promotion strongly or not strongly?"

	1986 % Opposed	1988 % Opposed	1990 % Opposed	1992 % Opposed	1994 % Opposed
Total	73% (54)	75% (60)	69% (51)	78% (60)	82% (62)
White Males	86 (66)	88 (71)	84 (63)	87 (71)	90 (70)
White Females	79 (58)	83 (68)	77 (58)	84 (64)	88 (67)
All Blacks	33 (18)	30 (18)	23 (10)	41 (26)	46 (27)
All Hispanics	56 (35)	56 (34)	46 (29)	60 (45)	71 (43)
All Democrats	65 (45)	66 (49)	62 (45)	71 (53)	74 (51)
All Independents	71 (53)	76 (63)	72 (53)	80 (63)	78 (61)
All Republicans	85 (67)	86 (72)	80 (60)	87 (70)	92 (73)
White Democrats	78 (55)	81 (63)	75 (56)	82 (63)	83 (59)
White Independents	78 (59)	84 (72)	84 (65)	86 (70)	85 (67)
White Republicans	88 (69)	90 (74)	85 (64)	89 (72)	94 (76)

"Some people say that because of past discrimination it is sometimes necessary for colleges and universities to reserve openings for black students. Others oppose quotas because they say quotas give blacks advantages they haven't earned. What about your opinion--are you for or against quotas to admit black students? Do you (favor/oppose) quotas strongly or not strongly?"

	1986 % Opposed	1988 % Opposed	1990 % Opposed	1992 % Opposed
Total	60% (40)	58% (42)	58% (37)	64% (44)
White Males	74 (51)	72 (45)	71 (48)	76 (54)
White Females	64 (43)	65 (46)	63 (39)	70 (47)
All Blacks	22 (12)	15 ( 3)	25 (13)	22 (14)
All Hispanics	43 (28)	34 ( 4)	37 (24)	49 (27)
All Democrats	52 (32)	49 (36)	53 (31)	56 (35)
All Independents	60 (40)	57 (39)	59 (43)	67 (48)
All Republicans	72 (51)	69 (49)	64 (43)	75 (54)
White Democrats	64 (40)	64 (48)	64 (38)	67 (44)
White Independents	66 (44)	64 (45)	68 (51)	74 (54)
White Republicans	74 (54)	73 (52)	69 (47)	78 (55)

Source: American National Election Studies

Note: Left columns indicate total Opposed; Columns in parentheses indicate Strongly Opposed  
Total Sample size varies from 1006 (1990) to 2233 (1992); sample size for Blacks ranges from 134 (1990) to 317 (1986); sample size for Hispanics ranges from 89 (1990) to 165 (1992).

TABLE 3

## THE ELUSIVE GENDER GAP IN PUBLIC OPINION AMONG WHITE CALIFORNIANS\*

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
Would vote "Yes" on CCRI	67%	58%
Oppose giving weight to gender vis-a-vis college admissions	89	84
Oppose giving weight to gender vis-a-vis a job or promotion	87	81
"Only a little" or "none at all" perceived discrimination against women in California	53	25
Men losing out because of affirmative action policies is of greater concern in the workplace than women losing out because of discrimination	46	24

\* Source: California Poll by the Field Institute. May 1995, sample size = 744.

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