

Notes for Lecture
EC 1370
2/11/10

Start with PC discussion, Wieseltier/Chait exchange.

When Affirmative Action Was White.

Some Sources:

- Katznelson's article: broaden AA in 3 ways: take long view; focus on jobs not just colleges; put AA on sounder footing (using Powell's 'strict scrutiny' from *Bakke*)
- Loury essay on AA in US/South Africa (integrates elites, not mass redistribution)
- Loury on slavery reparations (thinking about historical indebtedness to groups)
- Skrentny's *Ironies of AA* and his *Minority Rights Revolution*
- Senate Apology on no anti-lynching legislation (cf. Japanese Internment apology)
- Walter Ben Michael's *The Trouble with Diversity* (wrong rationale for AA)
- Tonry's, *Malign Neglect* (thinking about war on drugs' racially disparate impact)

Some Ideas:

- What did "Katrina" tell us about America (rising water is color-blind, but urban geography is not, with grave consequences for racial inequality (also in recession))
- Congressional Black Caucus' recent complaint to Obama on jobs (WH meeting)
- Color-blindness ideal (MLK's dream 'content of our character'; distinguish race 'blindness' from race 'indifference' = difference between instruments and goals)
- Moral deservingness and social policy (widows and orphans vs. unwed moms; elderly indigent vs. prime-age adult poor; 'if you work hard and play by the rules you shouldn't be poor' (Clinton) vs. 'it's time for those riding in the wagon to get out and help the rest of us push' (Phil Gramm))
- Reich 'Tales New America' – rugged individualism; Horatio Alger-ism; market
- Veterans vs. racial preferences; which AA groups (Latinos but not Slavs, e.g.)
- AA = democracy + elitism + diverse identities (a global problem)

Key Distinctions re. AA"

- Procedural vs. substantive ideas about equality: e.g., 10% plan; literacy tests
- Race blindness of Policy Instruments vs. race indifference of Policy Goals
- Racial policy instruments are consequence not cause our awareness of race
- Collect racial data? Enforce anti-discrimination laws? Recruitment and outreach? All of these can violate strict "color-blindness"; yet uncontroversial.
- Blindness in formal contracts, while 'sightedness' in informal social intercourse

Key Points on Slavery Reparations

- Conceptualizing the harm (not property, but status, stigma, 'social death'/dishonor)
- Political challenges (need coalitions; Walter Ben Michael's concerns)
- Epistemological problems (counterfactuals)
- Interpretative vs. compensatory model
- Civic construction goals (sacred/indefinite obligation vs. profane *quid pro quo*)