

Affirmative Action (Historical Guides to Controversial Issues in America)

John W. Johnson, Robert P. Green Jr.

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"Special consideration" or "reverse discrimination"? This examination traces the genesis and development of affirmative action and the continuing controversy that constitutes the story of racial and gender preferences. It pays attention to the individuals, the events, and the ideas that spawned federal and selected state affirmative action policies—and the resistance to those policies. Perhaps most important, it probes the key legal challenges to affirmative action in the nation's courts.

The controversy over affirmative action in America has been marked by a persistent tension between its advocates, who emphasize the necessity of overcoming historical patterns of racial and gender injustice, and its critics, who insist on the integrity of color and gender blindness. In the wake of related U.S. Supreme Court decisions of 2007, *Affirmative Action* brings the story of one of the most embattled public policy issues of the last half century up to date, demonstrating that social justice cannot simply be legislated into existence, nor can voices on either side of the debate be ignored.



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