

WRITING SAMPLE EXCERPTS FROM:

ORS 417

MOVING TOWARDS GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

LITERATURE REVIEW

***ON "THE IMPACT OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND DIVERSITY ON
ORGANIZATIONS."***

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❖ Affirmative action is a very good tool to utilize which enhances diversity and helps level the playing ground within employers, academic institutions, and the government. After doing my research, I have concluded that one of the greatest strengths of our nation is diversity.

❖ Holler and Neumark (2000) describe affirmative action as requiring pro-active steps to erase differences and level the playing field between all people.

Affirmative action originated within the Kennedy administration, with the Kennedy Order 10925 in 1961, which required government contractors to not discriminate regarding employment. This was backed up by the Johnson administration and in fact expanded to include women in the criteria that were not to be discriminated against. And new legislation Orders 11246 and 11375 in 1968 from the Department of Labor required federal contractors with 50 or more employees with contracts of \$50,000 or more to identify and report under-utilization of women or minorities and to set corrective action plans in place. Also, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 established the Equal Employment Opportunity act as a way of helping to erase past injustices. The EEOC also established an 80% rule, which basically states that anything less than an 80% selection rate of any race, sex, or ethnic group compared to the highest group rate, would be adverse. Protection was also given to Small/Disadvantaged Businesses (SDB) by adding 10 percent to non-small/disadvantaged businesses and then awarding the contracts based on that amount-which helps the underprivileged businesses complete. (Holzer and Neumark, 2000) Also, Section 706 (g) (1) of

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act allows a court to “order such affirmative action as may be appropriate, which may include reinstatement or hiring of employees,...” (Holzer and Neumark, 2000) p. 491 An example of leveling the field comes from (Holzer and Neumark, 2000) which cites Bates and Williams (1995), Myers and Chan (1996) and Rice (1995) which stated that in 1973 Atlanta had a black majority population, however black owned firms only received one-tenth of the city’s procurement business. But by 1976 it grew to 19.9% and by 1978 had risen to 38.5%. This is a great example of improving the inequity among trade and business allotments. At last, a major milestone was achieved during the “Great Society.”

❖ Walker and Poe (2002) posed two opposing hypotheses and then they discuss both. The first is that the more culturally homogenous a society, the less the realization of human rights. On the other end of the spectrum a view that the more culturally heterogeneous a society is the greater the realization of human rights. This should be fairly straight forward to most people as it shows how countries such as the United States which utilize diversity, benefits from it. This is in contrast to countries that strive to become culturally homogeneous and the lack of individual freedoms and rights which sometimes results in strife, even civil war or genocide. A heterogeneous society such as the United States which is a model of diversity puts forward an ethic and illustrates how individualism is desirable even if at a cost. Affirmative action does not diminish individualism but rather levels the field so that all can experience fair employment practices and retention. In the

end, having affirmative action works towards diversity and improving awareness to everyone. In “Game Theory” it is Positive-Sum since the rewards are somehow more than originally held. This is in contrast to 0-Sum where one party loses what the other gains. Or Negative-Sum where everyone’s share decreases. Although it may present obstacles to overcome, affirmative action builds diversity and is the right and moral approach to a problem that was long overlooked.

❖ From the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2000 Census, (Population profile of the United States 2000), the nation had a population of 281,421,000, with 75.1% of it being White, 12.3% of it Black, 3.6% of it Asian, with the remainder others. Michaelson and Shershow (2001), when analyzing statements by Justice Powell, stated “affirmative action theory as embedded in the Powell opinion and its many later judicial and scholarly commentaries begins from the assumption that affirmative action may only set as its goal a minimal sort of tokenism.” Politics definitely play a role in affirmative action and the direction the country is heading, Liberals or Conservatives will influence the future of affirmative action law and legislation. The immigration to the United States in the past also should be a valuable reminder that diversity is strength, not a weakness. The Irish and Asians immigrants were largely responsible for the labor workforce that built the railroad lines westward. And the world population question is another reason that we need to embrace diversity, as there simply is no other alternative.

With questions being raised whether we will be able to feed the worlds population if it doubles in size, the importance of being open to other cultures is important.

The United States is still the best example of diversity in the world.

❖ Perhaps affirmative action needs to be restructured. Not because of reverse discrimination, but rather to complement it. Affirmative action is needed today as much as when originated and we need to move forward, not backwards.

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