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| cartoon by Clay Bennett“*Affirmative Action*”, 2014Main idea: Affirmative action is controversial / a subject of debate in SCOTUSDescription: **2 characters depicted – SCOTUS justices Sotomayor and Thomas:*** **Sonia Sotomayor is in favour of AA – she is holding a sign with her name on it.**
* **Clrence Thomas is against AA – he is holding a sign with his name on it but it is upside down.**

Interpretation:**humorous cartoon, division about AA in SCOTUS, aiming at showing that putting an end to AA might be controversial but also that it is surprising that Clarence Thomas should be against AA since he most probably benefitted from it.****Points out the idea that it is ironical that AA should be ended by an African American justice.***The American SC seems to be walking on its head as affirmative action does have its proponents and unexpectedly one of the most fervent detractors is a black justice.* | “Supreme Court guts affirmative action, effectively ending race-conscious admissions” by Nina Totenberg, NPR, June 29th, 2023main idea : *SCOTUS put an abrupt end to affirmative action, a fraught and complex issue, though not as divisive as abortion*NPR = National Public Radio – the only public media in the US – supposedly the closest to an unbiased media* Affirmative action has both its detractors (justice Thomas) and its proponents (justices Sotomayor, Brown Jackson, CU president Bollinger, Melissa Murray, acting dean of UCB)
* Public opinion seemed to agree AA had to go (California poll 2020: a liberal state voted to ban AA)
* A complicated decision (a 237 page decision containing defense and criticisms justifying the ban) for which no other measure has actually been as efficient.

*This article, though it does make discreet hints at being in favour of affirmative action (eg “guts”) does not necessarily make a 100% clear-cut plea to defend affirmative action. Nonetheless, it backs the view that nothing works as well.* | “Why affirmative action in American universities had to go”June 30th, 2023, The Economist, journalistmain idea : a surprisingly biased view that affirmative action needed to go, based on the idea that is created inequalities, and it did not save the broader problem of fair and equal representation.* Though it concedes that AA was useful as it benefitted the oppressed and promoted diversity, better understanding, and fought against stereotypes,
* the SC was right to end a measure which promoted inequality, tarnished and weakened the skills of individuals over their belonging to a community and simply did not work due top university which still managed to enhance social reproduction by setting advantages for children of alumni and donors.
* Public opinion not in favour of the whole measure, thus SCOTUS was right to end it
* Society needs to address the bigger problem, which is not so much diversity than ending social reproduction.

*A biased British view of an American problem pointing towards the limits of AA and the failures of SCOTUS in fighting for total equality* | “This 1991 Book was Stunningly Prescient about Affirmative Action”, by Pamela Paul, The New York Times, May 25th 2023main idea : a review of Stephen Carter’s book “Reflections of an Affirmative Action Baby” published in 1991 by Pamela Paul, who read the book twice and defends the view that this book is still highly relevant 30 years on in apprehending the debate around affirmative action. Defends the view that AA was needed but was meant to be temporary, and addressing the question of racism is what needs to be done from now on* Stephen Carter and Clarence Laurence benefitted from affirmative action but also suffered from it for not defending what could be assimilated as the “black community view”.
* While AA was essential to stop historical discrimination, reducing people to their race-based identity is at best a stereotype, at worst racist.
* Public opinion in 1991 and in 2023 has shifted. In 1991 Carter’s book, though controversial was accepted and sometimes praised. According to Pamela Paul, the debate today is stifled.
* If AA goes away, the debate will focus on what really matters: addressing the persistent inequalities that America has been avoiding for so long.

*A biased and unexpected view of a journalist from the New York Times who seems to defend the idea that AA had to go because it defended long term racist views and did not allow all African Americans to defend their opinions as individuals.* |