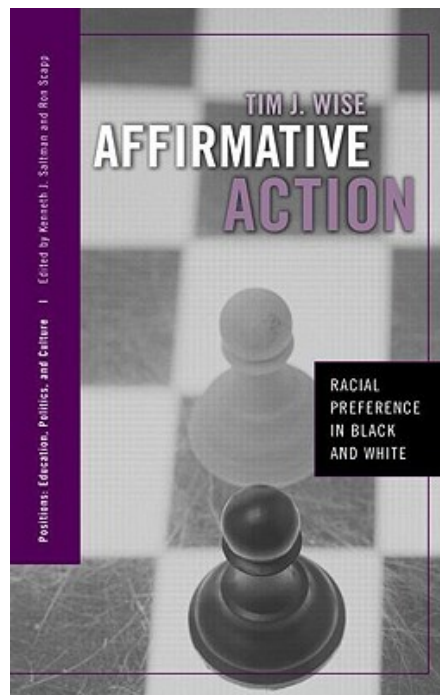




Affirmative Action: Racial Preference in Black and White

Tim Wise

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Affirmative Action examines the larger structure of institutional white privilege in education, and compares the magnitude of white racial preference with the policies typically envisioned when the term "racial preference" is used. In doing so, the book demonstrates that the American system of education is both a reflection of and a contributor to a structure of institutionalized racism and racial preference for the dominant majority.

Affirmative Action: Racial Preference in Black and White Details

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Author : Tim Wise

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LW says

This was very well-articulated. I would have given a higher rating were it not for the pages of statistics-- I know it's necessary to back up the arguments with such research, but I find my brain turning off during those parts. I love the clear citations and how the arguments flow point-by-point in a clearly organized fashion. There is much to be said for accessible language and writing styles! (Academics, are you listening?)

Erika says

I have my own concerns about affirmative action, but I also tend to get nervous when people somewhat rabidly call for its dismantling and complain about the unfairness of it. I lack the ability, however, to verbalize why I am critical of it on the one hand but feel that it's necessary on the other. I am not finished reading Wise's book yet, but what he is doing is giving me the words that I lack for why affirmative action is needed. What very few people (be they critics or supporters of affirmative action) seem to address or acknowledge is the reality of white privilege in the US and how it confers an advantage upon those who happen to be born white. Wise says in one part of the book that people use the terms "disadvantaged" and "under-represented" easily, but don't seem to realize that there is another side to those coins: if some is disadvantaged, then someone else is "advantaged," etc.

I am only about halfway through at this point, but I am finding it to be a very interesting and thought-provoking read.

Ben says

This pro-affirmative-action book was well-reviewed, but I found it pretty much a waste of time. In general, a lot of very well researched statistics are spent in taking cheap shots at straw men.

Wise also throws around phrases like "the right" (meaning, I assume, some faceless amalgamation of all those who disagree with his politics), and uses a lot of ironic quotation marks when he talks about affirmative action opponents who present "facts" and "proofs" in support of their positions. This sarcastic and distracting tone made it difficult to follow what arguments there were in the text.

Clearly Wise is passionate about his subject, but if he hopes to be convincing he needs to focus less on angrily debunking the crazy things some people say and more on building a solid foundation for his own position.

This is a book best enjoyed by people who already believe strongly in the value of affirmative action; for them, it will no doubt be an (ahem) affirmation. For reasonable opponents or those seeking a convincing argument, this book will be a disappointment.

Mike says

This is an excellent defense of affirmative action that reframes the debate to center on institutionalized white supremacy. It is against that backdrop that current efforts at racial preference for people of color are analyzed. There are a lot of really solid statistical analyses and the author as usual presents in a clear and straightforward manner. I highly recommend this book, but I don't want to just give anything Tim Wise writes a five even though it probably deserves it.

Mohamed Sall says

Affirmative Action is a controversial topic that polarizes many. This book analyzes Affirmative Action and its impact on America. Personally, I think that AA is needed to maintain a necessary diverse environment so as to foster open-mindedness and tolerance. I used this book in conjunction with many others in order to do my senior exit project. This book had too many statistics!

Misha says

Another must read for European-Americans. Points out a lot of flaws with the arguments against affirmative action. This is by no means a way to get unqualified people into spots based solely on the color of their skin.

Cherie says

B Brilliant look at affirmative action. To all those people who say, "I didn't get into school/this job/whatever b/c someone of color took it from me" - read this so you can debate them. Really shows how even when affirmative action exists, white privilege still pushes white people miles ahead of people of color. Great book.

Mijan Wilder says

loved it. was one of the selections for my Whiteness, Power and Privilege course. well thought out, easy read, and i love that a white man takes on the topic of institutionalized oppression

Expose Austin Texas Duty To Care For Others says

Another excellent book that discusses discrimination against minorities.

Beth says

Tim Wise does it again... Here's a very readable academic book with a carefully constructed argument for affirmative action that is simultaneously complex, straightforward in philosophy (guided by a strong sense of social justice), dryly humorous in places, and beautifully written. Wise doesn't have a PhD as far as I know, and he puts most academic writers to shame with his clear, accessible prose and care with citations (he backs up his points with tons of research results). Almost as good as his brilliant memoir-cum-call-to-action, *White Like Me*, which is one of the best nonfiction books I've ever read.
