



Written by [John Stossel](#) on July 12, 2023

College Racism

The Left is angry because the Supreme Court ruled race-based affirmative action unconstitutional. President Joe Biden says he “strongly disagrees.”

But Chief Justice John Roberts was right to say, “Eliminating racial discrimination means eliminating all of it.”

It’s a victory for Students for Fair Admissions, the group that sued, thereby forcing Harvard to admit that Asians had to score 22 points higher on the SAT than whites, 63 points higher than Blacks.

How did Harvard justify that? They said Americans of Asian descent score lower in personal attributes, like “likability.”

“Asian Americans are boring little grade grubbers,” complains the Asian American Legal Foundation’s Lee Cheng, in my video on race-based admissions. “That’s bulls-t,” he adds.

Economist Harry Holzer, who defended Harvard, says the school did the right thing.

“Asians are not interesting?” I ask. “They don’t have interesting qualities?”

“Personal ratings reflect a wide range of characteristics,” Holzer responds. “It’s possible that some of that is anti-Asian bias, but you certainly can’t prove that.... When you have a long history of discrimination based on race, you have to take race into account.”

“There are many, many, different ways to achieve diversity without discriminating against Asian Americans,” Cheng responds. “Race-focused affirmative action helps rich people. Seventy percent of the students of every ethnic group at Harvard come from the top 20 percent of family income.”

But Asians already do well in America, earning more money, on average, than other ethnic groups. Blacks have faced more discrimination. “Isn’t it Harvard’s job to try to make up for some of that?” I ask Cheng.

“The right path out of the history of discrimination based on race is not more discrimination,” he replies.

Cheng is right. Affirmative action is racist, and therefore wrong.

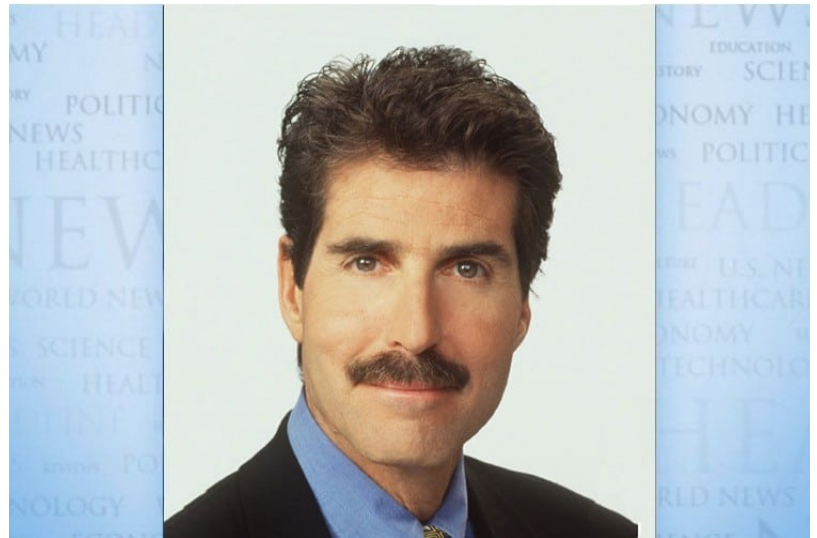
I once tried to make that point by holding a racist bake sale. I called it an “affirmative action bake sale.” I sold cupcakes at a mall. My sign read:

Asians — \$1.50

Whites — \$1.00

Blacks/Latinos — 50 cents

People stared. Some got angry. One yelled, “What is funny to you about people who are less



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privileged?" A Black woman called my sign "very offensive, very demeaning!" "You got to be out of your gosh darn mind, boy!" said another. One man accused me of poisoning the cupcakes.

But after the initial anger, when people let me explain the reasoning behind my racist sign, many expressed second thoughts about affirmative action. "I guess it is unfair," said one Black student.

I modeled my bake sale on what a student group at Bucknell University did to call attention to the racism of affirmative action. Bucknell officials shut down the students' experiment. Schools that practice affirmative action don't like to be confronted with the reality of affirmative action.

Now that affirmative action is illegal, universities will still discriminate by race. They'll just hide it better. One tactic is to become "test-optional." Over 1,800 schools, including Harvard, no longer require students to submit SAT scores.

Already, schools practice legacy admissions, meaning that they favor the children of alumni. That's clearly unfair. It helps mostly rich people, who are mostly white people.

The problem with both "test-optional" schools and affirmative action is that ultimately, it harms Black students. Those admitted with lower standards often struggle or drop out. Had they attended other schools, they might have done well.

And of course some people look at even the smartest Black students and wonder, is she really smart? Or did she just get in because of her race?

If activists want to help young people, they should start before college. Promote school choice. It allows all kids to escape bad public schools.

That will help more kids than rigging college admissions.

Every Tuesday at JohnStossel.com, Stossel posts a new video about the battle between government and freedom. He is the author of Give Me a Break: How I Exposed Hucksters, Cheats, and Scam Artists and Became the Scourge of the Liberal Media.

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