

1. Thomas Nagel categorizes Affirmative Action into "strong" and "weak" forms. In Nagel's framework, "strong" Affirmative Action refers to policies that actively favor members of historically disadvantaged groups, often through explicit quotas or preferential treatment. The aim is to rectify past injustices and promote diversity in various domains, such as education or employment. On the other hand, Nagel's "weak" Affirmative Action refers to policies that aim to create a more level playing field without relying on explicit preferences or quotas. Instead, they focus on addressing systemic barriers and providing equal opportunities for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds. These policies may involve outreach programs, scholarships, or targeted support to enhance access and promote diversity without using explicit preferential treatment. Nagel's descriptions highlight the distinction between more aggressive, proactive measures and more moderate, structural approaches (weak Affirmative Action) to address historical inequalities. Bradford-Reynolds presents a different framework by framing Affirmative Action in terms of "equal opportunity or equal results." This distinction revolves around the goal of Affirmative Action policies. According to Reynolds, the "equal opportunity" perspective focuses on providing fair access to opportunities for all individuals, regardless of their background. It emphasizes creating conditions where individuals from disadvantaged groups have an equal chance to compete on merit. This approach generally rejects preferential treatment or quotas, aiming to eliminate systemic barriers and promote a merit-based system. In contrast, the "equal results" perspective emphasizes achieving proportional representation or outcomes for historically disadvantaged groups. It argues that simply providing equal opportunities may not be sufficient to address deeply ingrained societal inequalities. This viewpoint may advocate for more aggressive measures, such as quotas or preferential treatment, to ensure underrepresented groups are adequately represented in specific domains.
2. Thomas Nagel and Bradford-Reynolds have different perspectives on Affirmative Action, and their positions can be understood as follows, Nagel's "thesis" regarding Affirmative Action can be inferred from his categorization into "strong" and "weak" forms. While Nagel acknowledges the need to rectify past injustices and promote diversity, he leans more towards the "weak" Affirmative Action perspective. He argues for policies that focus on providing equal opportunities, rather than explicit preferential treatment or quotas. Nagel's thesis suggests that society should strive to rectify systemic barriers and promote diversity through more moderate and structural measures, rather than implementing more aggressive preferential policies. Bradford-Reynolds' "thesis" can be understood by examining his description of Affirmative Action in terms of "equal opportunity or equal results." While Reynolds does not explicitly advocate for a specific position, his framework implies a preference for the "equal opportunity" perspective. He emphasizes the importance of creating fair conditions and eliminating systemic barriers

to ensure individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds have an equal chance to compete based on merit. Reynolds' thesis suggests that Affirmative Action should prioritize providing equal opportunities rather than focusing on achieving equal results through quotas or preferential treatment.

3. Nagel's position on Affirmative Action can be seen as rooted in a deontological ethical framework. Deontological ethics emphasizes principles and moral duties, independent of the consequences of actions. Nagel's focus on providing equal opportunities and addressing systemic barriers aligns with the deontological idea of fairness and justice. He may argue that it is the moral duty of society to rectify past injustices and promote equal opportunities for individuals, regardless of the potential outcomes or consequences. Bradford-Reynolds' justification for his position on Affirmative Action is more aligned with a utilitarian-style analysis. Utilitarianism is a consequentialist ethical theory that evaluates actions based on their outcomes and seeks to maximize overall happiness or well-being. While Bradford-Reynolds does not explicitly advocate for a specific position, his emphasis on equal opportunity suggests a utilitarian consideration of maximizing overall social welfare. By promoting fair conditions and equal opportunities, he may argue that society can achieve a more just and harmonious state, leading to overall positive consequences for individuals and society as a whole.
4. Determining which argument is better from a moral standpoint is subjective and depends on one's ethical framework and values. Some may agree with Nagel's emphasis on equal treatment and the avoidance of discrimination, arguing that strong forms of Affirmative Action can perpetuate a different kind of unfairness. Others may align with Bradford-Reynolds' focus on equal opportunity and argue that correcting historical disadvantages requires more active measures to ensure equal outcomes. But I believe Bradfords argument is better just because he believes in us being equal. Discrimination can manifest in subtle and indirect ways, making it harder to identify and address. Affirmative Action can help counteract implicit biases, structural inequalities, and systemic barriers that perpetuate unequal outcomes for disadvantaged groups. The debate often centers around the tension between achieving equality of opportunity and preserving the principles of meritocracy. Proponents of Affirmative Action argue that it is necessary to level the playing field and ensure fairness for historically marginalized groups. Critics argue that Affirmative Action can undermine merit-based selection processes. Considering these factors, the question of whether Affirmative Action is still needed is complex and subject to ongoing debate. It depends on various factors, including the specific context, societal values, and policy objectives. Some argue that alternative approaches focusing on equal opportunity and addressing structural inequalities may be more effective, while others contend that Affirmative Action remains necessary to achieve social justice and inclusivity. Ultimately, the assessment of the need for Affirmative Action requires a comprehensive examination of the current social landscape, an understanding of the specific challenges faced by disadvantaged groups, and an

evaluation of potential alternative strategies to promote equal opportunity and redress historical inequities.