

Jayden Dawson
Professor Hartl
BUS428
Nagel & Reynolds

- Which type of Affirmative Action does each author advocate? (What is the “thesis” of each?)

The term affirmative action changed from originally referring to only special efforts to ensure equal opportunity for people who have been discriminated against; to people of these groups determining access to positions they were formerly excluded from. Thomas Nagel calls the first sort of policy weak affirmative action and the second strong affirmative action. Nagel believes that strong affirmative action is a legitimate and indispensable method of pursuing a goal so important to national welfare that it can be justified as a temporary policy for both public and private institutions. He says there are three objections to strong affirmative action: it is inefficient, unfair, and it damages self-esteem.

Affirmative action is a subject of vital significance for our society. William Bradford Reynolds says that there is a world of difference between “affirmative action” as a measure of ensuring equality of opportunity and “affirmative action” as a tool for achieving equality of results. It used to be just a chance to compete versus now people who participate will arrive at the finish in prearranged places - places allocated by race or sex. Reynolds believes that the promise of equal results is a false one. We can never assure equal rights in a world in which individuals differ greatly in motivation and ability. Reynolds is opposed to any affirmative action except recruiting of applicants.