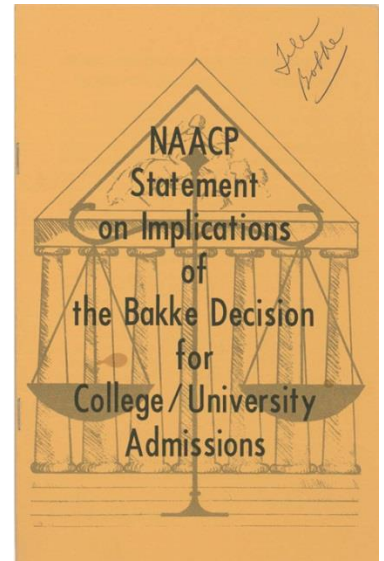


Close Reading of NAACP Statement

Source: "NAACP Statement on the Implications of the Bakke Decision for College/University Admissions. Pamphlet. Baltimore: NAACP, [1978]"

Background: Allan Bakke applied to medical school at UC Davis in California. Bakke was white. UC Davis used affirmative action in admitting new students. Affirmative action is a policy to help people in groups that have suffered discrimination in finding employment and education. The university used a racial quota system as affirmative action for minority applicants. A racial quota is a minimum number of non-white minority applicants that the school must accept.

UC Davis did not accept Bakke. He sued the university. He claimed that the university's racial quota system discriminated against him because he is white. In *Regents of University of California v. Bakke* (1978), the Supreme Court struck down the use of racial quotas in college and university admissions.



The court declared that racial quotas were violations of the equal protection clause. Equal protection of the laws protects both minorities and non-minorities. The court also decided that diversity in college classrooms is still a "compelling state interest." The court found that affirmative action could be used to achieve diversity.

Colleges and universities use several factors in judging applicants. Factors include grade point averages, standardized test scores, and an essay. The use of race as a factor, too, does not violate the equal protection clause.

Step 1

1. Read to the top of page four of the NAACP Statement (through the sentence that ends with "... past illegal conduct is appropriate"). Don't stop to think about any particular section. Pay attention to your first impression as to what the Statement is about.
2. Describe anything you see on the page besides words, such as images or decorations.
3. Who created it? Where was it created? When was it created? What was the purpose of this text?
4. Describe anything about this text that looks strange or unfamiliar.

Step 2

Define the following terms that appear in the document.

quota

affirmative action

admissions

Step 3

Re-read the assigned selection from the Statement, and briefly answer the following questions:

1. What was the decision of the Supreme Court in the case of *Bakke v. University of California Board of Regents*?
2. What does the Supreme Court think affirmative action is supposed to accomplish? Cite evidence from the text.
3. A) Summarize the opinion of each of the three groups of justices.

Burger, Stevens, Stewart, and Rehnquist

Marshall, White, Brennan, and Blackman

Powell

B) What does the variety of opinions on this case suggest about the significance of affirmative action?

