

Affirmative action was an unexpected, but also inevitable, byproduct of the U.S. Black freedom struggle of the 1960s. It was unexpected by the participants who shaped the initial civil rights policies adopted by the federal government between 1961 and 1965. But it also was an inevitable result of the fair employment practices that all of those actors fervently sought. Yet once those policies migrated from the federally-regulated workplace into higher education admissions processes, wholly forthright initiatives were recast over time into less candid practices that failed to give truly individualized consideration to persons who have suffered social and economic disadvantage.