

It's "Systemic Racism" -- Except When Asians Are Discriminated Against

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Sep 22, 2020(Amy Alkon/Advice Goddess Blog: <http://www.advicegoddess.com/goddessblog.html> Delivered by Newstex) It's "Systemic Racism" -- Except When Asians Are Discriminated Against That's when racial discrimination gets a big "progressive" thumbs up. In California, there's been a bid -- Prop 16 -- to undo the 1996 ban on racial discrimination in public employment, contracting and education. William McGurn writes^[1] in the WSJ that, despite language to obscure the true goals of the measure, it is foundering with California voters.

So what explains the people's resistance? Certainly much of it comes from California's Asian-American community, some of whom have become politically active for the first time. But Asian-Americans account for only 15% or so of the state's population. The Public Policy Institute of California poll suggests many non-Asians also have strong doubts about returning to race preferences in state decisions. As dubious as Proposition 16 is on its face, it is especially noxious in California given the state's history of anti-Asian bias. In the late 19th century the Golden State was an early champion of the Chinese Exclusion Act and passed other discriminatory legislation targeting Chinese workers. At this time California was also home to the Workingmen's Party, a labor organization whose leader was famous for his slogan "The Chinese must go." And only this year did the California Assembly pass a resolution apologizing for its discrimination against Japanese-Americans during World War II. Affirmative action, promoted in the name of diversity, is nowhere near as intentionally malicious as any of these historical anti-Asian efforts. But its effects are nasty and unfair. Just ask the family of the Chinese-American high-school grad who doesn't get into a top university, for which she is more than qualified, because of her skin color. What could be a clearer example of "systemic racism"? In the lack of tolerance for Asian-Americans asserting themselves, moreover, today's progressives can be as indelicate as any 19th-century pol. According to Politico, after a newly awakened Asian-American community rallied in 2014 to beat back an earlier effort to repeal the constitution's prohibition against racial preferences, California Assemblywoman Cristina Garcia told her Democratic caucus, "This makes me feel like I want to punch the next Asian person I see in the face." Ms. Garcia, re-elected since her comments surfaced in 2018, is today a proud "yes" vote. So what's the strategy going forward? A fundraising email from Yes on 16 acknowledged dispiriting poll results but said that "support surges" once Californians learn that Proposition 16 is supported by Ms. Harris and Mr. Newsom while "opposed by Donald Trump and white supremacists." Never mind that Mr. Trump has nothing to do with Proposition 16 and hasn't said a word about it. Even so, given the president's deep unpopularity in California and that 1 in 5 voters remain undecided, such a campaign may work. But it requires California voters to buy the new progressive argument that Asian-Americans fighting for equal treatment are in fact agents of white supremacy. [1]: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/an-anti-asian-proposition-11600729855>

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