Narrative Highground: The Failure of Intervention as a Procedural Device in Affirmative Action Litigation

Danielle R. Holley
NARRATIVE HIGHGROUND:
THE FAILURE OF INTERVENTION AS A PROCEDURAL DEVICE IN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION LITIGATION

Danielle R. Holley†

INTRODUCTION

Litigation provides an opportunity for parties to seek legal redress for wrongs, and to define their rights under the law. Litigation also provides a unique forum for the presentation of a party's story or narrative about a particular issue or set of facts.1 The current debate surrounding the consideration of race and ethnicity in

† Associate Professor of Law, Hofstra University School of Law. B.A., Yale College; J.D. Harvard Law School. I would like to thank my family, Peter Spiro, Linda McClain, John DeWitt Gregory, James Garland, Alafair Burke, and Earl Campbell for their comments, support, and advice during this project. I would also like to thank Gisella Rivadeneira, Christopher Fickes, Serge Thony, and Jasinta De La Cruz for their invaluable research assistance.

1 One commentator has described the role of narrative or storytelling in law as:

Examining law as narrative and rhetoric can mean many different things: examining the relation between stories and legal arguments and theories; analyzing the different ways that judges, lawyers, and litigants construct, shape, and use stories; evaluating why certain stories are problematic at trial; or analyzing the rhetoric of judicial opinions, to mention just a few particulars. But as a matter of general outlook, treating law as narrative and rhetoric means looking at facts more than rules, forms as much as substance, the language used as much as the idea expressed (indeed, the language used is seen as a large part of the idea expressed).

Paul Gerwitz, Narrative and Rhetoric in the Law, in LAW'S STORIES 3 (Peter Brooks & Paul Gerwitz eds., 1996). See generally Strickler v. Greene, 527 U.S. 263, 307 (1999) (Souter, J., dissenting in part) (refusing to discount the narrative force of the witness’s story upon the jury); Old Chief v. United States, 519 U.S. 172, 187 (1997) (explaining that trial testimony and evidence tell a story with “descriptive richness,” creating a narrative that has the power to support conclusions and sustain the willingness of the fact finder to draw inferences); Anita F. Hill, The Scholarly Legacy of A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr.: Voice, Storytelling and Narrative, 53 RUTGERS L. REV. 641, 645-49 (2001) (discussing the frequent use of narratives and stories in the law through the presentation of witnesses, attorneys’ arguments, and the official narrative of a case presented in judicial opinions); Richard A. Posner, Legal Narratology, 64 U. CHI. L. REV. 737, 738-39 (1997) (“Stories play a big role in the legal process. Plaintiff and defendant in a trial each tell a story, which is actually a translation of their ‘real’ story into the narrative and rhetorical forms authorized by law, and the jury chooses the story that it likes better.”).
higher education admissions policies has largely been defined through litigation.

The stories of the parties in higher education affirmative action litigation are so well known that the average layperson may be able to describe the plaintiff's claims. The story of the litigation begins when a Caucasian applicant seeks admission to a college or graduate school. The Caucasian applicant is denied admission, but is aware that the college or graduate school has an affirmative action policy under which the school considers race or ethnicity in the admissions process. The Caucasian applicant then files suit against the university and its officers, claiming that the university's consideration of race in its admissions process is unconstitutional. It is this seemingly straightforward narrative that has come to define higher education affirmative action litigation.

The second narrative in higher education affirmative action cases is the narrative of the university defendant. This narrative is almost as well known as the plaintiff's narrative. The university

---

2 This Article uses the term "affirmative action" to refer to all university admissions policies that include the explicit consideration of race, ethnicity, or national origin as a factor in the admissions process. The term "affirmative action" originated in a 1961 Executive Order issued by President John F. Kennedy requiring government contractors to take "affirmative action" to prevent discrimination on the basis of "race, creed, color, or national origin" in hiring and employment practices. Exec. Order No. 10,925, 3 C.F.R. 448, 450 (1961). This executive order was superseded by a 1965 Executive Order issued by President Lyndon Johnson that established the Office of Federal Contract Compliance. Exec. Order No. 11,246, 3 C.F.R. 339, 340 (1965). This order established a nondiscrimination requirement for private firms performing work for the federal government, and stated that "[t]he contractor will take affirmative action to ensure that applicants are employed, and that employees are treated during employment, without regard to their, race, creed, color, or national origin." Id.; see also Lan Cao, The Diaspora of Ethnic Economies: Beyond the Pale?, 44 WM. & MARY L. REV. 1521, 1537 (2003) (discussing the evolution of the meaning of the term "affirmative action"); William W. Van Alstyne, Affirmative Actions, 46 WAYNE L. REV. 1517, 1527-30 & n.10 (2000) (tracing the history and evolution of the term "affirmative action").


4 See, e.g., Gratz v. Bollinger (Gratz III), 123 S. Ct. 2411, 2417 (2003) (stating that plaintiffs were two white Michigan residents who were denied admission to the University of Michigan's College of Literature, Science, and the Arts); Grutter v. Bollinger (Grutter V), 123 S. Ct. 2325, 2332 (2003) (describing plaintiff Barbara Grutter as a white resident of Michigan who applied for admission to the University of Michigan Law School, and after being denied admission filed suit claiming the Law School's admission policy used race as a predominant factor in violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment); Hopwood v. Texas (Hopwood II), 78 F.3d 932, 938 (5th Cir. 1996) (describing four plaintiffs as white Texas residents denied admission to University of Texas Law School).
defendant’s narrative centers around a defense of affirmative action on the basis that racial diversity is a compelling governmental interest, as required under Fourteenth Amendment Equal Protection Clause analysis, because racial diversity is integral to the university’s educational mission. Its narrative attempts to demonstrate that racial diversity allows different perspectives to be included in classroom discussions, and that producing a racially diverse group of graduates provides benefits to the state, such as professionals who will work in underserved communities. The university defendant’s story rarely includes a discussion of the university or state’s history of racial discrimination, or any explanation of the connection between the university’s current affirmative action program and the university’s past racial discrimination.

The third narrative of the higher education affirmation action lawsuit is not as well known, and has become marginalized in both the public and academic debate surrounding these cases. The third narrative is the story of minority students who are greatly affected, as the direct beneficiaries, of these race-conscious admissions policies. The minority students’ narrative is introduced into the litigation through the procedural device of intervention, which

---

5 See, e.g., Gratz III, 123 S. Ct. at 1245 (describing the University of Michigan’s defense that race-conscious admissions policies were necessary to create a diverse student body and a rich educational experience); Grutter V, 123 S. Ct. at 2333-35 (detailing the testimony of the Law School’s witness regarding diversity as a justification for the school’s race-conscious admissions policy); Hopwood II, 78 F.3d at 941 (stating that the University of Texas Law School defended its affirmative action admissions policy by claiming that the goal of the program was to obtain educational benefits that flow from a racially diverse student body).

6 This Article uses the term “minority students” to define the class of intervenors. The term “minority” is meant to include African-Americans, Native Americans, and Hispanics because these racial and ethnic groups are most often designated as the groups aided by the race-conscious admissions policies addressed herein. Although this Article refers to the intervenors’ narrative as equivalent to the minority student’s narrative, some of the intervenors in these cases include Caucasian students interested in preserving race-conscious admissions policies.

7 See Emma Coleman Jones, Litigation Without Representation: The Need for Intervention to Affirm Affirmative Action, 14 HARV. C.R.-C.L. REV. 31, 40 (1979) (stating that minorities have a significant interest in protecting affirmative action admissions policies); William Kidder, Affirmative Action in Higher Education: Recent Developments in Litigation, Admissions, and Diversity Research, 12 LA RAZA L.J. 173, 174 (2001) (“Students of color – not university administrators – have the broadest, deepest and most urgent interests in preserving affirmative action.”).

One commentator has suggested that the benefit to minority students from affirmative action may have led to the erroneous perception that white applicants are being significantly harmed by these policies. Goodwin Liu argues that admissions policies that consider race as a factor may provide minority applicants with a significantly better chance of being admitted, but that there is no basis to infer that the improved chances of minority applicants means that white applicants would have a better chance of being admitted in the absence of affirmative action, because affirmative action may not be the actual cause of the white applicant’s rejection. This “causation fallacy . . . erroneously conflates the magnitude of affirmative action’s instrumental benefit to minority applicants, which is large, with the magnitude of its instrumental cost to white applicants, which is small.” Goodwin Liu, The Causation Fallacy: Bakke and the Basic Arithmetic of Selective Admissions, 100 MICH. L. REV. 1045, 1046-49 (2002).
allows a person or group with an interest in the lawsuit to become a party even though the existing litigants have not named the person or group as a party.8

Federal Rule of Civil Procedure ("FRCP") 24 allows either intervention as a matter of right or permissive intervention.9 Minority students and public interest organizations have sought to intervene to defend affirmative action admissions policies in every recent higher education affirmative action case,10 including the two recent University of Michigan affirmative action cases, *Grutter v. Bollinger* and *Gratz v. Bollinger*.11

Similar to the university defendant, the minority students' narrative focuses on defending the affirmative action policies. The minority student intervenors often tell a story about the value of racial diversity to a university community. However, the minority students' narrative diverges from the university defendant's in an important way. It often attempts to connect current affirmative action policies with the state and/or university's past and current racially discriminatory policies or practices.12

This narrative also serves as an alternative viewpoint on the individualized effects of affirmative action admissions policies. While the Caucasian plaintiff's narrative attempts to portray individualized harm associated with considering race in admissions, the minority student intervenors present a narrative of individualized harm associated with admissions programs that do not utilize affirmative action.13

---


9 See infra note 27.

10 See Johnson v. Bd. of Regents Univ. of Ga. (Johnson II), 263 F.3d 1234, 1238 (11th Cir. 2001) (permitting a group of African-American University of Georgia students to intervene); Grutter v. Bollinger (Grutter II), 188 F.3d 394 (6th Cir. 1999) (reversing the district court's denial of motion to intervene); Hopwood v. Texas (Hopwood I), 21 F.3d 603 (5th Cir. 1994) (affirming the district court's denial of motion to intervene); Gratz v. Bollinger (Gratz I), 183 F.R.D. 209 (E.D. Mich. 1998), rev'd, 188 F.3d 396 (6th Cir. 1999) (denying motion to intervene).

11 See *Grutter II*, 188 F.3d at 396 (holding that minority students and public interest groups should be allowed to intervene in the litigation).

12 See, e.g., id. at 400 (concluding that the minority students' argument that the university would be less likely to present evidence of past and current discrimination was persuasive); *Hopwood I*, 21 F.3d at 605 (describing the minority students' argument that their only interest is preserving affirmative action policies to remedy past discrimination, and that minority students are in a better position than the university to present evidence of recent discrimination); Peter Schmidt, *Minority Students Win Right to Intervene in Lawsuit Attacking Affirmative Action*, CHRON. OF HIGHER EDUC., Sept. 3, 1999, at A68 (presenting the statement of the lawyer representing the minority student intervenors that "black and other minority students will be able to bring into the courtroom the truth about continuing inequality and racism and bias in higher education").

13 See generally BENJAMIN BAEZ, The Stories We Tell: Law, Race, and Affirmative Ac-
This Article will argue that despite intervention in higher education affirmative action lawsuits, the minority students' narrative has been marginalized in these cases. In litigation, one party's narrative gains central importance or relevance, and becomes reflected in the court's decisionmaking. In higher education affirmative action litigation, the dominant narrative has become that of the Caucasian plaintiff. This Article will demonstrate that the marginalization of the minority students' narrative is a direct outgrowth of the minority students' status as intervenors, in that the court treats intervenors as outsiders in the framework of litigation. Intervention, a procedure designed to transform bipolar litigation into a context that affords protection to third parties with substantial interests at stake in the litigation, fails as a procedural device in these cases.

Part I of this Article will examine and recount the history of intervenors in higher education affirmative action cases from Regents of the University of California v. Bakke to the recent Michigan cases, Grutter and Gratz. In all of these cases, courts at varying levels have either refused to hear, or have marginalized, the minority students' narrative. These cases form three different categories based on the court's recognition or adoption of the minority students' narrative. The first category consists of those cases in which the minority students' narrative was completely invisible, because intervention was denied. This category of cases includes Bakke and Hopwood v. Texas. The second category consists of those cases in which the minority students' narrative is marginalized. These instances of marginalization occur when minority students become intervenors in the case, but the decision-making process largely ignores their arguments, witnesses, and evidence. This category includes Johnson v. University of Georgia, and the two University of Michigan affirmative action cases.

---

14 See id. at 96 (stating that judges tell stories in order to convince others that their opinions are correct).
Grutter and Gratz. The third category consists of those cases in which the minority students’ narrative is given full recognition and adopted by the court. Up to this point, intervention has failed to produce any cases that would be included in this third category in which there is full recognition and incorporation of the minority student’s narrative.

Part II of the Article will examine the failure of intervention as a procedural device in higher education affirmative action cases. The relative success or failure of intervention as a procedural device in these cases will be measured on two levels. First, intervention will be measured as a procedural device based on the policy considerations underlying the rule of intervention. Commentators, most notably Abraham Chayes, have noted that intervention is one procedural device that is a marker of public law litigation.\textsuperscript{17} Public law litigation is litigation in which the plaintiff seeks to vindicate their constitutional or statutory rights in a way that affects more than the parties themselves.\textsuperscript{18} There are many policy reasons underlying intervention in public law litigation, such as affirmative action cases. These policy goals include using intervention as a means of assisting the court in information gathering, judicial economy, and preventing injury to nonparties.\textsuperscript{19} On most of these policy levels, intervention fails in higher education affirmative action cases.

In the specific context of higher education affirmative action cases, many commentators have argued that intervention is necessary in order to ensure that the courts hear the voices of minority students.\textsuperscript{20} These commentators assume that having the status of an intervenor is a good unto itself, in that the intervenors have an opportunity to put forth their arguments before the court. However, if, as in many of the higher education affirmative action cases, the intervenors’ unique story is ignored or unrecognized by the court, intervention a less effective procedural mechanism.

Part III will argue that the central value of intervention sought to be fulfilled by the minority student intervenors is the opportunity to present a distinctive narrative to both the courts and the public, which is not being presented by either the plaintiff or university defendants in affirmative action cases. Intervention efforts, however, have failed to present a meaningful opportunity for mi-

\textsuperscript{17} See, Abraham Chayes, The Role of the Judge in Public Law Litigation, 89 HARV. L. REV. 1281, 1290-91 (1976).
\textsuperscript{18} Id. at 1284.
\textsuperscript{19} See infra notes 123, 138, and 147.
\textsuperscript{20} See generally, Jones, supra note 7, at 31; Kidder, supra note 7, at 174.
nority students to become the central narrative in the continuing legal debate surrounding affirmative action.

Therefore, Part III proposes that, following the Supreme Court’s decisions in Grutter and Gratz, minority students should abandon further efforts at intervention, and should instead become plaintiffs in lawsuits to challenge current “race-neutral” admissions standards, such as the Law School Admissions Test (“LSAT”). In the alternative, minority students may choose to take legislative action through ballot initiatives and other measures to replace traditional admissions criteria and expand the current justifications for race-conscious admissions policies. By positioning themselves as plaintiffs, or as the authors of legislative reform, minority students will be able to realize recognition of their unique narrative.

I. INTERVENTION IN HIGHER EDUCATION AFFIRMATIVE ACTION LITIGATION

Intervention is a procedural device intended to enable a party or group with a substantial interest in the subject of litigation to become a party in the case to protect their rights. Intervention is often compared to other procedural devices in the federal rules that recognize that “a lawsuit is often not merely a private fight and will have implications on those not named as parties.” Although

21 See WRIGHT & MILLER, supra note 8, § 1901, at 228 (stating that intervention is a procedure in which an outsider in a lawsuit becomes a party, even though not named as a party by the exiting litigants); James Wm. Moore & Edward H. Levi, Federal Intervention I. The Right to Intervene and Reorganization, 45 YALE L.J. 565 (1936) (describing intervention as a procedural device that allows a stranger to the litigation to present a claim or defense in a pending action, thus becoming a party in the proceeding); Jean M. Radler, When Is Intervention as a Matter of Right Appropriate Under Rule 24(a)(2) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure in Civil Rights Action, 132 A.L.R. FED 147 (1996).

Federal Rule of Civil Procedure (“FRCP”) 24 was adopted in 1938 in an attempt to codify existing practice in federal courts at law and in equity. WRIGHT & MILLER, supra note 8, § 1903, at 233. Originally the rule allowed for intervention as a matter of right under FRCP 24(a)(3) when a party had an interest that was not adequately represented by the parties. The rule provided a separate category for intervention as a matter of right under FRCP 24(a)(3) when a party had an interest that may have been adversely affected by the distribution of property in the court’s custody. Id. A substantial amendment to FRCP 24 occurred in 1966, when these two categories were collapsed into a single provision under 24(a)(2) to allow intervention as a matter of right when the existing parties fail to adequately represent the intervenor’s property interest or other substantial interest. Id. at 234. The 1966 amendment also altered the language of the rule to no longer require that intervenors be third parties that would be bound by the court’s judgment under the principles of res judicata; instead, under the current rule, the intervenor applicant need only establish that the disposition of the action may “as a practical matter . . . impair or impede” the applicant’s ability to protect their interests. Id. at 237.

22 WRIGHT & MILLER, supra note 8, § 1901, at 228. The other procedural devices that attempt to protect the interests of third parties not initially named in the lawsuit include FRCP 19 (compulsory joinder), and FRCP 23 (class actions). Id. at 228-29; see also Moore & Levi, supra note 16, at 565-67 (comparing intervention to joinder in its use as a procedural mechanism
intervention does not create a cause of action.\textsuperscript{23} Intervenors have rights similar to those of parties in the litigation.\textsuperscript{24} Intervenors may file motions, participate in discovery, introduce direct testimony, conduct cross-examination, and appeal adverse rulings.\textsuperscript{25} An intervenor’s ability to add witnesses and present separate and sometime conflicting positions on existing issues in the litigation often leads to the litigation becoming more complex.\textsuperscript{26} Due to the increased burden on the court and the existing parties as a result of intervention, the rule itself, and courts interpreting the rule, have standards to determine when a party should be allowed to intervene in a pending action.

FRCP 24 provides for two types of intervention: intervention as a matter of right and permissive intervention.\textsuperscript{27} Under FRCP 24(a), intervention as a matter of right is allowed when a federal statute confers a right of intervention to the applicant for intervention, or when the applicant is able to demonstrate that they have an interest in the subject matter of the transaction, and that their ability to protect that interest may be substantially impaired by the court’s disposition of the case.\textsuperscript{28} The majority of circuits use a four-part standard to determine whether a party’s motion to intervene as a matter of right under FRCP 24(a)(2) should be granted: (1) timeliness of the filing of the motion; (2) whether the proposed intervenor claims an interest relating to the property or transaction which is the subject of the litigation; (3) whether the disposition of the litigation may impair or impede the proposed intervenor’s right for the protection of third party interests).

\textsuperscript{23} See Radler, supra note 21, at 147.
\textsuperscript{25} Id.
\textsuperscript{26} Gene R. Shreve, Questioning Intervention as a Matter of Right – Toward a New Methodology of Decisionmaking, 74 NW. U. L. REV. 894, 903 (1980) (stating that the intervenor may complicate the original parties’ preparation by adding new claims and witnesses).
\textsuperscript{27} FED. R. CIV. P. 24 states:

(a) \textit{Intervention of Right}. Upon timely application anyone shall be permitted to intervene in an action: (1) when a statute of the United States confers an unconditional right to intervene; or (2) when the applicant claims an interest relating to the property or transaction which is the subject of the action and he is so situated that the disposition of the action may as a practical matter impair or impede his ability to protect that interest, unless the applicant’s interest is adequately represented by existing parties.

(b) \textit{Permissive intervention}. Upon timely application anyone may be permitted to intervene in an action: (1) when a statute of the United States confers a conditional right to intervene; or (2) when an applicant’s claim or defense and the main action have a question of law or fact in common. When a party to an action relies for ground of claim or defense upon any statute or executive order administered by a federal or state governmental officer or agency or upon any regulation, order, requirement, or agreement issued or made pursuant to the statute or executive order, the officer or agency upon timely application may be permitted to intervene in the action. In exercising its discretion the court shall consider whether the intervention will unduly delay or prejudice the adjudication of rights of the original parties.

\textsuperscript{28} Id.
to protect that interest; and (4) whether the proposed intervenor’s interest is adequately represented by the existing parties. In recent higher education affirmative action litigation, the applicants for intervention have sought to intervene as a matter of right by demonstrating that they had a substantial interest in the university being allowed to continue to consider race as a factor in admissions, and that their interest was not adequately represented by the university defendants.

From Bakke to the most recent Michigan cases, courts at varying levels have either refused to hear or have marginalized the minority students’ narrative. These cases form three different categories or groups based on the court’s recognition or adoption of that narrative. The first category consists of those cases in which the minority students’ narrative was completely invisible, because intervention was denied. This category of cases would include Bakke and Hopwood v. Texas. The second category consists of those cases in which the minority students’ narrative is marginalized. These instances of marginalization occur when minority students become intervenors in the case, but the courts, in their decisionmaking process, largely ignore their arguments, witnesses, and evidence. This category includes Johnson v. University of Georgia, and the two University of Michigan affirmative action cases, Grutter v. Bollinger and Gratz v. Bollinger. The third category consists of those cases in which the minority students’ narrative is given full recognition and adopted by the court. Up to this point, intervention has failed to produce any cases that would be included in this third category where there is full recognition and incorporation of the minority student’s narrative.

A. Invisible Intervenors – Bakke and Hopwood

In Regents of the University of California v. Bakke, a Caucasian applicant, Allen Bakke, was denied admission to the Univer-

---

29 See Trbovich v. United Mine Workers, 404 U.S. 528, 538 (1972) (describing the standard for a federal court to grant intervention as a matter of right under FRCP 24(a)(2)); see also Reid v. Ill. State Bd. of Educ., 289 F.3d 1009, 1017 (7th Cir. 2002); United States v. City of Los Angeles, 288 F.3d 391, 398 (9th Cir. 2002); Butler, Fitzgerald & Potter v. Sequa, 250 F.3d 171, 176 (2d Cir. 2001); Loyd v. Ala. Dept. of Corrs., 176 F.3d 1336, 1339-40 (11th Cir. 1999); Standard Heating & Air Conditioning v. Minneapolis, 137 F.3d 567, 571 (8th Cir. 1998); Pub. Serv. Co. of N.H. v. Patch, 136 F.3d 197, 204 (1st Cir. 1998); Mich. State AFL-CIO v. Miller, 103 F.3d 1240, 1245 (6th Cir. 1997); Coalition of Ariz./N.M. Counties v. Dep’t of Interior, 100 F.3d 837, 840 (10th Cir. 1996); Mountain Top Condo. Ass’n v. Dave Stubbert Master Builder, Inc., 72 F.3d 361, 365-66 (3d Cir. 1995); Sierra Club v. Espy, 18 F.3d 1202, 1205-07 (5th Cir. 1994); Teague v. Barker, 931 F.2d 259, 260-61 (4th Cir. 1991); see generally MOORE, supra note 8, § 24.03 (describing the development of intervention practice); WRIGHT & MILLER, supra note 8, § 1907 (describing the intervenor’s interest in the subject of the action).

30 438 U.S. 265 (1978). The facts of Bakke have received significant treatment. See Liu,
University of California at Davis Medical School. Bakke filed suit against the Medical School, claiming that the Medical School's race-conscious admissions policy violated the federal Constitution, California's state constitution, and Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Unlike recent higher education affirmative action cases, Bakke filed his lawsuit in state court; therefore FRCP 24 was not available for minority students or public interest groups to seek intervention. At the trial court level, no intervention was sought; however, when the case reached the California Supreme Court, the NAACP Legal Defense Fund requested that the case be remanded to the trial court "for a new trial with directions to the trial court to permit the real parties in interest [minority students] to present evidence on the full range of issues." The California Supreme Court failed to address this request for a remand, and thus neither minority students nor public interest groups became intervenors in Bakke.

Hopwood v. Texas presents another example of the complete invisibility of the minority students' narrative in affirmative action litigation that flows from the denial of a motion to intervene. In Hopwood, a Caucasian applicant to the University of Texas Law

supra note 8, at 1050-54 (describing the Medical School's admissions policy and Bakke's qualifications).

31 Bakke, 438 U.S. at 278-79.

32 See id. at 277 (stating that suit was filed in the Superior Court of California). At the time Bakke was filed, California did allow intervention entirely at the discretion of the trial court; however, intervention was not sought at the initial trial proceedings in Bakke. See Jones, supra note 7, at 34 n.11 (citing CAL. CIV. PROC. CODE § 387 (West 1973)). After Bakke, the California legislature amended the state's intervention rule to conform with FRCP 24(a). Id.

33 Jones, supra note 7, at 33 n.9 (citing Petition of NAACP for Leave to File as Amicus Curiae on Petition for Rehearing).

34 The California Supreme Court's lack of response to the NAACP's petition was likely due to the procedural posture of the case at the time the NAACP sought the equivalent of intervention. At the trial court level the court found in favor of Bakke, holding that the Medical School's admissions policy violated the federal constitution, state constitution, and Title VI because the admissions policy operated as a racial quota. Bakke, 438 U.S. at 279. The trial court refused to grant the injunctive relief sought by Bakke on the basis that Bakke failed to carry his burden that he would have been admitted to the Medical School but for the existence of the affirmative action program. Id. The California Supreme Court affirmed the trial court's holding regarding violation of the federal constitution, and initially ordered remand for a new trial on the issue of whether Bakke would have been admitted to the Medical School. Id. at 279-80. The Medical School filed a petition for rehearing that included a stipulation that the Medical School could not demonstrate that Bakke would have been denied admission absent the affirmative action program. Id. at 280. After this stipulation was entered the California Supreme Court amended its opinion to provide for an entrance of judgment, instead of a remand for a trial. Id. at 281. The NAACP's request for a remand for a new trial in which intervenors could be heard was filed after the Medical School's stipulation, thus when the California Supreme Court reconsidered its remand due to the stipulation there would no longer be a trial in which intervenors could participate as parties. See Jones, supra note 7, at 33 n.9 (explaining that the NAACP's request for a remand to allow intervention came after the Medical School's stipulation, but before the Court's decision on the petition for rehearing).

35 Hopwood v. Texas (Hopwood I), 21 F.3d 603 (5th Cir. 1994).
School filed suit against the state of Texas, the Board of Regents of the Texas State University System, and the University of Texas Law School, claiming that the Law School’s admissions procedures that considered race as a factor were unconstitutional.\textsuperscript{36} Two groups representing minority students, the Thurgood Marshall Legal Society and the Black Pre-Law Association sought to intervene in the lawsuit.\textsuperscript{37}

The district court denied the motion to intervene, and the Fifth Circuit affirmed the denial of the motion, finding that the intervenors failed to establish that the Law School would not adequately represent the intervenors’ interests.\textsuperscript{38} The Fifth Circuit concluded that the proposed intervenors failed to demonstrate that the Law School would not strongly defend its affirmative action policy, or that the intervenors had a separate defense for the program based on a past discrimination argument.\textsuperscript{39}

Despite the common goals of the University of Texas Law School and the minority applicants for intervention to maintain the race-conscious admissions policy, the minority students presented a narrative that was far from identical to that of the university. The proposed intervenors argued that they had an interest in both maintaining the Law School’s then existing admissions policy, and also in eliminating vestiges of past discrimination.\textsuperscript{40} The proposed intervenors also proffered that race-conscious remedies were necessary responses to the past discriminatory practices of the state and the university.\textsuperscript{41} The proposed intervenors further claimed that

\textsuperscript{36} Id. at 604.
\textsuperscript{37} The proposed intervenors sought both intervention as a matter of right under FRCP 24(a), and in the alternative, permissive intervention. The Fifth Circuit utilized the majority standard for intervention as of right: (1) interest in the subject matter of the litigation; (2) that disposition of the action may practically impair or impede the movant’s ability to protect that interest; and (3) that the interest is not adequately represented by the existing parties. Id. at 605 (citing Diaz v. So. Drilling Corp., 427 F.2d 1118, 1124 (5th Cir.), cert. denied, 400 U.S. 878 (1970)).
\textsuperscript{38} Id. at 605. The Fifth Circuit stated that while the burden for a party to demonstrate inadequate representation is generally “minimal,” in cases where the party whose representation is at issue is a government agency the burden to demonstrate inadequate representation is higher. Id. (citing \textit{WRIGHT & MILLER, supra} note 8, § 1909). This higher burden is due to the presumption that the State represents the interests of all the state citizens. Id. at 605. This presumption of adequate representation when the government is a party has been criticized by many courts and commentators. \textit{See} Katherine Goeppl, \textit{Presumed Represented: Analyzing Intervention as of Right When the Government Is a Party}, 24 W. \textit{NEW ENG. L. REV.} 131 (2002) (proposing that there should be no presumption of adequate representation when the government is a party).
\textsuperscript{39} Hopwood I, 21 F.3d at 605-06.
\textsuperscript{40} Id. at 605.
\textsuperscript{41} Id. (“The BPLA and TMLS argue that they have met their burden of showing that their interests are different from the State’s. . . . Moreover, they argue that because of its competing goals, the State is not in as good a position to bring in the evidence of present effects of past discrimination and current discrimination.”).
their unique narrative would provide better evidence of the past discrimination.42

B. Marginalized Intervenors: Johnson, Grutter, and Gratz

In Johnson v. Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia,43 three Caucasian female plaintiffs filed suit against the University of Georgia ("UGA") claiming that UGA's 1999 admissions policy violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and Title IX by considering race and gender in the admissions process. Shortly after the lawsuit was filed, a group of African-American UGA students and potential applicants represented by the NAACP Legal Defense Fund were allowed to intervene in the lawsuit.44 The district court granted summary judgment to the plaintiffs, holding that UGA's admissions policy violated the Equal Protection Clause, Title VI, and Title IX, and specifically finding that creating diversity was not a compelling interest to justify the consideration of race or gender in the admissions process.45 On appeal, the Eleventh Circuit affirmed the district court's grant of summary judgment to the plaintiffs, but refused to affirm the district court's holding that diversity was not a compelling interest that would justify UGA's consideration of race as a factor in its admissions policy.46 Instead, the Eleventh Circuit found that even if creating di-
versity was a compelling interest, UGA's admissions policy was not narrowly tailored to meet this goal. 47

Both the district court and appellate court in Johnson largely ignored the narrative of the intervenors. The intervenors agreed with the university defendants that diversity was a compelling interest that would allow the university to consider race in the admissions process. However, they also contended that the consideration of race was necessary to eliminate vestiges of past discrimination. The intervenors argued at summary judgment that UGA's history of de jure and de facto racial discrimination was extensive. For UGA's first one hundred sixty years, no African-American students were admitted. 48 After African-American students were admitted in 1961, the Office of Civil Rights ("OCR") ordered UGA to submit a desegregation plan and adopt affirmative action programs to alleviate vestiges of the university's past discrimination. 49

The district court only addressed the university's argument that the admissions policy was justified by the university's desire to create student body diversity. The district court never acknowledged, in the factual background or legal analysis, the university's history of overt discrimination towards African-Americans or the role of affirmative action in alleviating vestiges of past discrimination. 50

In contrast, the Eleventh Circuit addressed the past discrimination aspect of the intervenors' narrative directly. While the appellate court acknowledged the intervenors' argument that UGA's race-conscious admissions policy was necessary to ameliorate the vestiges of intentional past discrimination, the court claimed that the intervenors failed to sufficiently raise this issue before the district court. 51 The court acknowledged UGA's past de jure segregation policies, but claimed that the summary judgment evidence on this point was insufficient. 52 The appellate court also claimed that OCR's 1989 lifting of the desegregation order demonstrated that

47 Id. at 1244-58 (finding that the court need not resolve the issue of whether student body diversity is a compelling interest because UGA's system of "mechanically" awarding bonus points to all applicants of certain racial and ethnic groups was not narrowly tailored to meet the diversity goal, since applicants were not considered on an individualized basis).
48 Id. at 1239.
49 Id.
50 See Johnson I, 106 F. Supp. 2d at 1367-70 (analyzing the UGA admissions policy only under Bakke and post-Bakke case law regarding diversity as a compelling government interest).
51 Johnson II, 263 F.3d at 1264 ("Intervenors did not advance [the past discrimination argument] in any meaningful way at the time of summary judgment.").
52 Id. (stating that there was little persuasive evidence in the summary judgment record to support the intervenors' argument that "preferential treatment of all non-white applicants" was necessary to remedy present effects of past discrimination).
affirmative action was no longer necessary to ameliorate vestiges of past discrimination. Further, the court noted that UGA itself disavowed past discrimination as a justification for its consideration of race in the admissions process.

In 1997, Caucasian plaintiffs filed two separate lawsuits challenging admissions procedures at the University of Michigan College of Literature, Arts and Science ("LSA") and the University of Michigan Law School, respectively. In *Grutter*, the plaintiff, Barbara Grutter, claimed that the Law School's admissions process violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by considering an applicant's race or ethnicity in the admissions process.

A group of forty-one individual minority students, and three pro-affirmative action coalitions applied for intervention in the *Grutter* case. The forty-one individual student applicants were divided into three groups. First, the applicants for intervention included twenty-one African-American, Latino/a, Caucasian, and Asian undergraduates from various institutions who asserted that they intended to apply to the University of Michigan Law School. The individual applicants also included five African-American high school students who intended to apply for admission to LSA and the Law School. The last group of individual applicants included fifteen African-American, Caucasian, Latino/a, and Asian graduate students, including twelve Law School students. Joining the individual intervenor applicants were three organizations: United for Equality and Affirmative Action, a coalition of the individual intervenors, the parents of the minor applicants for intervention, and other affirmative action supporters; the Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action By Any Means Necessary, a political action coalition with chapters in California and Michigan; and Law Students for Affirmative Action, a pro-affirmative

---

53 *Id.* at 1264-65.
54 *Id.*
56 *Grutter V*, 123 S. Ct. at 2332; *Grutter v. Bollinger* (Grutter IV), 288 F.3d 732, 735 (6th Cir. 2002).
58 *Grutter I Motion to Intervene*, * supra* note 54 (setting forth the undergraduate student intervenors who included undergraduates from the University of Michigan, University of California at Berkeley, Wayne State University, and Diablo Valley Community College).
59 *Grutter II*, 188 F.3d at 397.
60 *Id.*
action organization that organized campus demonstrations in support of affirmative action.\textsuperscript{61}

The intervenor applicants sought intervention in March 1998.\textsuperscript{62} The intervenor applicants claimed that they should be allowed to intervene as a matter of right under FRCP 24(a)(2) because the Law School could not adequately represent their interests in the lawsuit.\textsuperscript{63} Specifically, the applicants argued that the Law School would fail to raise several defenses, including the Law School’s past discriminatory practices and the continuing use of racially discriminatory admissions criteria such as the LSAT, and that the Law School would not be able to produce sufficient evidence related to segregation and resegregation of educational institutions.\textsuperscript{64}

The district court initially denied the applicants’ motion to intervene as a matter of right.\textsuperscript{65} The district court found, similar to the Fifth Circuit in \textit{Hopwood}, that the applicants for intervention failed to establish that they had a different interest from the Law School defendants, or that the Law School defendants would not adequately represent the applicants’ interest.\textsuperscript{66} The court concluded that the applicants for intervention had the same “ultimate objective” as the Law School defendants: to preserve the current admissions policy that takes race and ethnicity into consideration.\textsuperscript{67}

Similarly, the district court in \textit{Gratz} also denied the intervenor applicants’ motion to intervene.\textsuperscript{68} The intervenor applicants in \textit{Gratz} included seventeen African-American and Latino/a high school students who intended to apply or had already applied to LSA, and one organization, the Citizens for Affirmative Action’s Preservation (“CAAP”).\textsuperscript{69} The district court found that the inter-
The intervenor applicants failed two of the requirements for intervention.\textsuperscript{70} The court concluded that the intervenor applicants lacked a substantial interest in the outcome of the litigation, and that the applicants failed to demonstrate that the university defendants inadequately represented their interests.\textsuperscript{71}

Hearing a consolidated appeal on the intervenor applicants’ motions to intervene in both \textit{Gratz} and \textit{Grutter}, the Sixth Circuit reversed the district courts’ decisions and held that the intervenor applicants in both cases met the requirements for intervention under FRCP 24.\textsuperscript{72} In examining the intervenor applicants’ legal interest in the litigation, the court noted that in the Sixth Circuit there is “a 'rather expansive notion of the interest sufficient to invoke intervention of right.’”\textsuperscript{73} Based on this broad definition of a substantial legal interest, the Sixth Circuit panel found that the intervenor applicants’ interest in maintaining race and ethnicity as a factor in the admissions process was sufficient to meet the intervention requirements.\textsuperscript{74} The court described the intervenor applicants’ interest as an interest in preserving the numbers of minorities enrolled at LSA and the Law School, and in preserving educational opportunity.\textsuperscript{75} The court rejected the \textit{Gratz} district court’s conclusion that a “substantial legal interest” must be a legally enforceable right to have the admissions policy construed.\textsuperscript{76} Instead the court noted that the intervenor applicants’ “specific interest in the subject matter of this case, namely their interest in gaining admission to the University,” was a direct interest more than sufficient to constitute a “substantial legal interest” under FRCP 24(a).\textsuperscript{77}

The intervenors in \textit{Grutter} and \textit{Gratz} presented a unique narrative characterized by three aspects: past discrimination, the institutional racism undergirding the use of LSAT scores and GPA as admissions criteria, and the state’s unitary education system. The first focus of the intervenors’ narrative was their emphasis on the link between race-conscious admissions programs and the univer-

\textsuperscript{70} \textit{Gratz I}, 183 F.R.D. at 212-16.

\textsuperscript{71} Id.

\textsuperscript{72} Id. at 396.

\textsuperscript{73} Id. at 398 (quoting Mich. State AFL-CIO v. Miller, 103 F.3d 1240, 1245 (6th Cir. 1997)).

\textsuperscript{74} Id. at 398-99 (explaining that the \textit{Gratz} court erred in finding that in order for the proposed intervenors to have a “significant legal interest” as required under FRCP 24(a)(2), the intervenors must have legally enforceable right to have the court determine the constitutionality of the current admissions policy).

\textsuperscript{75} Id. at 398.

\textsuperscript{76} Id. at 398-99.

\textsuperscript{77} Id. at 399.
The intervenors claimed that a central justification for the current university admissions policies were that the policies serve as a remedy for the past discrimination. The intervenors argued that the university was unlikely to raise this defense because it would require the university to highlight its discriminatory practice, possibly subjecting the university to liability.

Furthermore, the intervenors argued that the University of Michigan's affirmative action policy was in direct response to civil rights protests to end racial discrimination by the university. According to the intervenors, African-American students at the University of Michigan organized the Black Action Movement ("BAM") in March 1970 to encourage the university to increase African-American enrollment. As a result of a strike organized by BAM, the university announced that it would attempt to meet the student's demands for increased enrollment through an affirmative action program. The intervenors also asserted that as a result of protests by black students in 1975 and 1987, the then-president of the university issued a mandate which became the framework for the current university admissions policies, including the Law School's 1992 policy.

At trial, the intervenors also clarified the past discrimination aspect of their narrative through trial testimony. The intervenors presented two witnesses to testify regarding the history of racial inequality in the United States. Historian John Hope Franklin, professor emeritus of history at Duke University, testified about the history of race relations in the United States. Professor Franklin's testimony included a wide-ranging account of racial hostilities and inequality, including race riots and Jim Crow segre-

---

78 See infra notes 83-90 and accompanying text (containing the intervenors' central argument that their "substantial legal interest" was preserving minority access to learning in light of the history of overt racial discrimination).
79 Grutter I Motion to Intervene, supra note 54.
80 Id.
81 Id.
82 Id.
83 Id.
84 Id.
85 In Grutter, the district court conducted a fifteen-day bench trial in January and February 2001. The district court asked the parties to focus on three issues: "(1) the extent to which race is a factor in the law school's admissions decision; (2) whether the law school's consideration of race in making admissions decision constitutes a double standard in which minority and non-minority students are treated differently; and (3) whether the law school may take race into account to 'level the playing field' between minority and non-minority applicants." Grutter v. Bollinger (Grutter III), 137 F. Supp. 2d 821, 825 (E.D. Mich. 2001), rev'd, 288 F.3d 732 (6th Cir. 2002), aff'd, 123 S. Ct. 2325 (2003).
86 Id.
Eric Foner, a leading history professor, also testified about the general history of racial oppression and inequality in the United States.

The second aspect of the Grutter intervenors' narrative was the emphasis on what the intervenors argued is an inherent racial bias in the use of standardized testing and GPA as admissions criteria. The intervenors argued that the use of the LSAT alone, without the consideration of race as a factor in admissions, would lead to the resegregation of most elite institutions of higher education. This resegregation would occur as a result of the "LSAT gap" that exists between the LSAT scores of minority students and white students. The intervenors' expert suggested that this gap existed as a result of cultural bias in the test itself, and the experiences of the test takers that influence their test taking methods. The intervenors concluded that in order to fairly evaluate the LSAT scores of an applicant as a criteria for admission, the Law School must take race into account in order to account for the "LSAT gap," which is caused by race-related factors.

The final aspect of the Grutter intervenors' narrative was their focus on the unitary nature of the state educational system. One
of the continuous themes in the intervenors' arguments and the testimony offered by them at trial was the notion that the state's higher education system must be viewed as a continuation of the elementary and secondary school education offered by the state of Michigan. The intervenors argued that segregation and inequality in elementary and secondary education is increasing, which is another cause of the continuing gap between minorities and whites in standardized tests. Also, a witness for the intervenors claimed that the elimination of affirmative action in higher education has a trickle-down negative impact on elementary and secondary schools, increasing inequality and eroding the "overall quality of public education" in the state.

The district court in *Grutter* is the only court during the course of the litigation that addressed the intervenors' narrative—both their presentation of facts and legal arguments directly. The *Grutter* district court held that, under *Bakke*, creating racial diversity was not a compelling interest such that it would allow the Law School to consider race as a factor in admissions in a constitutionally permissible manner. After a detailed treatment of the plain-secondary schooling on minority performance in higher education).

---

95 Id. at 31.
96 Id. at 30. See Defendant-Intervenors' Final Brief at 8-16, *Grutter v. Bollinger* (*Grutter IV*), 288 F.3d 732, 735 (6th Cir. 2002) (No. 01-1447/01-1516) (arguing that the nation's primary and secondary schools remain largely segregated and these schools "systematically disadvantage black, Latino/a, and Native American students of all social and economic backgrounds"), available at http://www.umich.edu/~urel/admissions/legal/grutter/gru_fin.appeal.html.
97 Defendant-Intervenors' Brief in Support of Defendants' Motion for Summary Judgment, *supra* note 91, at 30. Eugene Garcia, Dean of the Graduate School of Education at the University of California at Berkeley, had testified that in jurisdictions such as California where affirmative action was eliminated at the university level, the overall quality of education at the primary and secondary school level declined. *Id.*
98 *Grutter v. Bollinger* (*Grutter III*), 137 F. Supp. 2d 821, 850 (E.D. Mich. 2001), rev'd, 288 F.3d 732 (6th Cir. 2002), aff'd, 123 S. Ct. 2325 (2003). The district court also held in the alternative that even if diversity were a compelling interest, the Law School's admissions policy was not narrowly tailored to serve this interest. *Id.* at 850-53. After concluding that the Law School's admissions policy was not narrowly tailored, the district court found that the individual defendants were entitled to qualified immunity from monetary damages. *Id.* at 853. Also, the court held that the Law School's policy violated Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and that the individual defendants could be held liable for monetary damages under Title VI. *Id.* at 853-54. The district court pointed to the policy's use of the term "critical mass" as a goal for the number of minority students that should be enrolled at the Law School, and determined that "critical mass" was insufficiently defined to meet the requirements for narrow tailoring. *Id.* at 850-51.

The court also determined the Law School policy insured the enrollment of a minimum percentage of minority students, making the policy indistinguishable from a quota. *Id.* at 49-50. The district court found that the narrow tailoring criteria were not met due to the policy's lack of a time limit on the use of race. *Id.* Finally, the district court concluded that the Law School's admissions policy failed the narrow tailoring requirement by failing to provide a sufficient reason for considering race only for African-Americans, Native Americans, and Hispanics, and that the Law School failed to investigate race-neutral methods for creating diversity in enrollment.
tiffs' and defendants' evidence and legal arguments, the district court provided a separate analysis of the intervenors' witnesses, exhibits, and legal arguments. The district court summarized the testimony of each of the intervenors' witnesses, and presented findings of fact and conclusions of law specifically addressing the intervenors' arguments. The district court pointed to the GPA and LSAT gap between Caucasians and the minority groups specified in the Law School's admissions policy, and acknowledged that the reasons for the gap were "complex." The court acknowledged that "while one must be cautious in making generalizations, the evidence at trial clearly indicates that much of the GPA gap is due to the fact that disproportionate numbers of Native Americans, African Americans, and Hispanics live and go to school in impoverished areas of the country." The court reasoned that even if you accept the intervenors' factual assertions, the intervenors' arguments fail as a basis for the Law School's admissions policy because the Supreme Court has rejected general societal discrimination as a justification for "race-conscious decision making."

In contrast to the district court's detailed, although disparate, treatment of the intervenors' evidence and legal arguments, the Sixth Circuit largely ignored the intervenors. Although the Sixth Circuit found that diversity was a compelling interest in the creation of the Law School's admissions policy, they never ad-

---

Id. at 851-53. The court argued that other groups beyond the three identified in the admissions policy had been subjected to discrimination, "such as Arabs and southern and eastern Europeans," but the Law School made no commitment to enroll these students in "meaningful numbers." Id. at 852.

99 Id. at 855-72.
100 Id.
101 Id. at 865.
102 Id. The district court did not accept all of the intervenors' evidence regarding the GPA gap. The district court harshly criticized the expert report of Professor Allen, who testified regarding a study he conducted which showed that minority students at majority undergraduate institutions face racially hostile environments that inhibit their ability to succeed academically. Id. at 859-50. The district court concluded that the court was unable "to give any weight to Professor Allen's study [of the GPA gap], due to the small number of students who participated in the focus groups and surveys and due to the manner in which the students were selected." Id. at 865.

103 Id. at 869 (citing Wygant v. Jackson Bd. Of Educ., 476 U.S. 267, 274 (1986)). The district court drew this conclusion without considering the unique context of an educational setting. The recent Supreme Court cases dismissing general societal discrimination as a justification for affirmative action were in the government contracts and employment contexts, not education. Also, the district court failed to distinguish between race-conscious policies based on past discrimination, and policies based on continuing or present racial disparities. The intervenors also presented evidence of present discrimination specifically in the Michigan public education system, through the testimony regarding the ongoing racial segregation in secondary and elementary schools in Michigan. See supra notes 98-99 and accompanying text.

104 Grutter v. Bollinger (Grutter IV), 288 F.3d 732, 739 (6th Cir. 2002) (stating that be-
dressed the intervenors’ contention that the Law School’s admissions policy was justified based on past discrimination. In fact, the court explained that as a result of their finding that diversity is a compelling interest, they would not address the intervenors’ past discrimination argument. Therefore, after an offer of substantial trial testimony related to past discrimination, this aspect of the intervenors’ narrative was neither addressed nor adopted by the university defendants or the court.

The Supreme Court affirmed the Sixth Circuit’s opinion that the Law School’s use of race and ethnicity in its admissions policy did not violate either the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment or Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. The Supreme Court found that while the use of race is subject to a strict scrutiny analysis to assure its compliance with the Fourteenth Amendment, creating diversity in the law school environment is a compelling government interest, and the Law School’s 1992 policy was narrowly tailored to meet this goal.

The majority opinion completely ignored past discrimination as an alternative justification for the Law School’s admissions’ policy. In the factual and procedural history of the case, the majority failed to even acknowledge that the intervenors applied for intervention, and that after being included in the case, presented thirty hours of testimony at trial.

The majority opinion likely ignored the intervenors and their arguments because of the way the issue was framed for consideration. The Court stated that certiorari was granted “to resolve the disagreement among the Courts of Appeals on a question of national importance: Whether diversity is a compelling interest that can justify the narrowly tailored use of race in selecting applicants for admission to public universities.” Also, in the factual and

cause the court was bound by Bakke, the court found that the Law School had a compelling interest in creating a diverse student body).

See id.

Id. at 739 n.4 (“Because we hold that the Law School has a compelling interest in achieving a diverse student body, we do not address whether the Intervenors’ proffered interest – an interest in remedying past discrimination – is sufficiently compelling for equal protection purposes.”).


Id. at 2341-42.

See id. at 2338-40 (stating that throughout the litigation, the Law School asserted only one justification for the admissions policy, namely “obtaining ‘the educational benefits that flow from a diverse student body”’).

See id. at 2331-35. The intervenors were also denied the opportunity to participate in oral argument at the Supreme Court.

Id. at 2335. Also, the majority opinion in Gratz specifically noted that the Court would not address a past discrimination justification for the admissions policy because the Law School itself never offered past discrimination as a reason for adopting the policy. Gratz v. Bollinger
procedural history of the case, the Court noted that according to the testimony of Professor Lempert, the Law School’s 1992 admission policy was not intended as a remedy to past discrimination, but was instead intended to bring “a perspective different from that of members of groups which have not been the victims of such discrimination.”

II. THE FAILURE OF INTERVENTION AS A PROCEDURAL DEVICE

A. Failure to Meet Policy Objectives Underlying Intervention

Intervention has failed as a procedural device in the higher education affirmative action cases. In order to measure the success or failure of intervention in a particular litigation, it is necessary to consider the general policy objectives underlying intervention. Higher education affirmative action cases are a classic example of what has been called public law litigation. As initially described by Abraham Chayes, public law litigation is litigation in which the plaintiff’s object is the vindication of constitutional or statutory policies.

The traditional conception of adjudication is private law litigation, through which private parties seek to settle a dispute regarding private rights. The defining features of private law litigation are a bipolar structure: a dispute that focuses on an identified set of prior events, a lawsuit that is initiated by a private party and controlled by the private parties, and a judgment that is con-

---


113 Chayes, supra note 17, at 1284; see also Carl Tobias, Standing to Intervene, 1991 WIS. L. REV. 415, 419 (1991) (stating that public law litigation is comprised of lawsuits that vindicate social values and affect large numbers of people); Cindy Vreeland, Public Interest Groups, Public Law Litigation, and Federal Rule 24(a), 57 U. CHI. L. REV. 279, 279-80 (1990) (arguing that the adoption of the Fourteenth Amendment and the passage of legislation creating statutory rights and remedies has increased the situations in which courts are called upon to render judgments affecting a large number of persons).

114 Chayes, supra note 17, at 1282.
In contrast, in public law litigation, the bipolar structure of litigation has given way to suits involving multiple parties, most notably class action litigation. The judges also engage in what is known as legislative fact finding, in which the judge will attempt to gather evidence about an entire system, such as a state's prison system or school system, instead of gathering facts that pertain just to the named parties in the litigation. Also, in public law litigation, remedies are focused not just on the dispute between the parties, but on remedies that are forward looking and affect large numbers of people in society, such as desegregation orders.

In public law litigation, public interest groups often seek to intervene to advocate and protect the rights of third parties that may be affected by a decision that will define the contours of a particular statutory or constitutional right. In a common public law litigation scenario, the government may seek to enforce administrative regulations against an industrial company, and the Sierra Club, or other environmental public interest organization, will seek to intervene to protect the interest of citizens whose environmental resources are affected by the alleged Clean Air Act violations. Due to the special role for intervenors in public law litigation,

---

115 Id. at 1282-83.
116 Id. at 1291.
117 Id. at 1297 ("In public law litigation, then, factfinding is principally concerned with 'legislative' rather than the 'adjudicative' fact."); Tobias, supra note 108, at 420 ("In institutional reform cases, for example, courts may undertake major responsibility for fact-gathering, even appointing adjuncts such as special masters, to fulfill what essentially are 'quasi-legislative' or 'quasi-administrative' decisional duties.").
118 Abraham Chayes explains:

> The liability determination is not simply a pronouncement of the legal consequences of past events, but to some extent a prediction of what is likely to be in the future. And relief is not a terminal, compensatory transfer, but an effort to devise a program to contain future consequences in a way that accommodates the range of interests involved.

Chayes, supra note 17, at 1294; see also Tobias, supra note 113, at 419-20 (noting that public law litigants seek remedies to vindicate rights and interests that are "abstract, ideological, collective or public in character").
119 Ernest E. Shaver, Intervention in the Public Interest Under Rule 24(a)(2) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, 45 WASH. & LEE L. REV. 1549, 1558-59 (1988) (noting that public interest groups seek to intervene to defend policies or legislation consistent with the group's objectives); Carl Tobias, Public Law Litigation and the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, 74 CORNELL L. REV. 270, 328-29 (1989) (arguing that the concept of interest under FRCP 24(a)(2) is important to public interest organizations because they represent large numbers of people who have interests that may seem individually insubstantial or intangible); Vreeland, supra note 113, at 283 (noting that public interest groups intervene to represent outsiders in litigation that will have a broad impact beyond the parties to the case).
120 There are numerous examples of public interest groups intervening as a matter of right under FRCP 24(a). See, e.g., United States v. City of Los Angeles, 288 F.3d 391 (9th Cir. 2002) (affirming the district court's denial of the ACLU's motion to intervene in a consent decree between the United States and the city of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Police Department, and
gation, the policy concerns underlying intervention in these suits are clear.

Four policy reasons are typically given for the presence of intervenors in public law litigation: (1) preventing injury to nonparties; (2) assisting the court in information gathering and providing expertise; (3) judicial economy; and (4) adding legitimacy to the court's decision. In examining the role of intervention in public law litigation, many commentators have identified all or some of these four policy considerations. Courts have also recognized these four policy considerations when deciding whether to allow intervention in public law.

The courts of appeals have put forth various guideposts for public interest groups wishing to intervene as a matter of right. See, e.g., Kootenai Tribe of Idaho v. Veneman, 313 F.3d 1094 (9th Cir. 2002) (stating that even if the federal government defendant discontinues its opposition to a plaintiff's position and does not appeal any court ruling in a plaintiff's favor, a private party may still seek intervenor status to take up appeals as intervenor-defendants); United States v. City of Los Angeles, 288 F.3d 391 (9th Cir. 2002) (noting that the circuit permits intervention in consent decrees, even where the consent decree is finalized prior to judicial approval of the intervention, with the understanding that intervention is not retroactive and intervenors will only be allowed to participate in post-decree activity); N.W. Forest Res. Council v. Glickman, 82 F.3d 825 (9th Cir. 1996) (stating in dictum that a public interest group has a better chance of successfully intervening if they were involved in the enactment of the law or administrative proceeding in question).

It is not only large, well-funded public interest organizations that seek intervention; often local community groups also seek intervenor status. See, e.g., Stupak-Thrall v. Glickman, 226 F.3d 467 (6th Cir. 2000) (affirming the district court's denial of motion to intervene by the Wilderness Association, a group comprising three local environmental groups and a local resident); Solid Waste Agency of N. Cook County v. U.S. Army Corps of Eng'rs, 101 F.3d 503 (7th Cir. 1996) (denying a group of residents in Bartlett, Illinois, permission to intervene as defendants in litigation relating to the Corps of Engineers denial of a permit to build a waste disposal facility).

121 See infra note 125, 138, 147, 149 and accompanying text.

122 See, e.g., Grutter v. Bollinger (Grutter II), 188 F.3d 394, 398 (6th Cir. 1999) (internal citations omitted); Kleisser v. United States Forest Service, 157 F.3d 964, 969 (3d Cir. 1998) (stating policy preference to allow intervention to minimize judicial economy by preventing collateral attacks); Massachusetts School of Law at Andover, Inc. v. United States, 118 F.3d 776, 778 (D.C. Cir. 1997) (noting that intervention is an information gathering technique used by courts).
I. Preventing Injuries to Nonparties

The most prominent policy reason underlying intervention is the need to protect the interest of third parties that are not present in the lawsuit. Since the inception of FRCP 24, both courts and commentators have heralded intervention as an important procedural device to ensure that third parties that may be affected by the outcome of litigation are given an opportunity to be heard by the court. In the realm of public law litigation, and specifically affirmative action litigation, intervention was seen as necessary to allow minority students who would be affected by the outcome of the litigation an opportunity to be heard by the courts. Despite the objective that intervention will give an outside party a procedural method to protect their interests in the litigation, intervenors remain outsiders in the litigation.

The tendency to neglect intervening parties is largely explained by the fact that the trial and appellate courts in higher education affirmative action cases, even after intervention, have treated the litigation as a private (bipolar type) litigation. In Johnson, Grutter, and Gratz, the courts responded to the litigation framework established by the original parties to the lawsuit – the plaintiff and the university defendant. The original parties generally asked the courts to address a single question: Whether under the Fourteenth Amendment the university is entitled to use race as a factor in admissions in order to enhance the diversity of the stu-

---

123 See John E. Kennedy, Let's All Join In: Intervention Under Federal Rule 24, 57 KY. L.J. 329, 334 (1969) (noting that intervention as a matter of right is permitted to protect the interest of nonparties); Shaver, supra note 119, at 1570 (1989); Tobias, supra note 119, at 328-29 (noting that intervention provides a valuable opportunity for third parties to participate in litigation that could adversely affect their interests); Vern R. Walker, Note, The Timeliness Threat to Intervention as a Matter of Right, 89 YALE L.J. 586, 587 (stating that intervention of right is intended to serve the policy goal of minimizing injustice to nonparties).

124 See supra note 119.

125 See supra notes 40-42, 93-104 and accompanying text.

126 See generally Tobias, supra note 119, at 327-29. Tobias argues that the courts' development of the four considerations for intervention as a matter of right have adversely affected public interest litigants that seek to intervene. Id. at 327. Tobias explains that the intervention of right standard reflects a "private law" brand of judicial thinking, and courts continue to apply the intervention rule public law litigation as if it were private litigation. Id. at 328.

127 See Gratz v. Bollinger (Gratz III), 123 S. Ct. 2411, 2420 n.9 (2003) (refusing to address the past discrimination rationale because university denied that this was a justification for the admissions policy); Grutter v. Bollinger (Grutter V), 123 S. Ct. 2325, 2334 (2003) (addressing only the diversity justification and stating that the university never offered past discrimination as a rationale for its admissions policy); Grutter v. Bollinger (Grutter IV), 288 F.3d 732, 739 (6th Cir. 2002) (stating that the court would only address the issue of whether diversity is a compelling government interest); Johnson v. Bd. of Regents Univ. of Ga. (Johnson II), 263 F.3d 1234, 1264 (11th Cir. 2001) (providing minimal analysis of intervenors' past discrimination rationale); Johnson v. Bd. of Regents Univ. of Ga. (Johnson I), 106 F. Supp. 2d 1362, 1367-70 (S.D. Ga. 2000) (analyzing UGA admissions policy only based on the diversity rationale).
dent body at the university. As a result, courts have made the diversity justification the central issue in all of these cases.\(^{28}\) The intervenors attempted to broaden the framework of the litigation by including additional justifications for the race-conscious admissions program, namely past discrimination and the discriminatory effects of current admissions criteria.\(^{29}\) The trial and appellate courts essentially rejected the intervenors’ attempts to add or contribute additional information outside of the framework set up by the plaintiff and defendant.\(^ {30}\) In this way, the court reacted to the intervenors’ arguments in the mode of a private rights litigation.

This attempt by the trial and appellate courts to limit the framework or scope of the litigation by ignoring the facts and legal arguments presented by the intervenors is a displacement of the balance of interests that should be considered upon a motion to intervene. The district court considering a motion to intervene should balance the interests of the original parties and the court in a streamlined, less-complex litigation, with the interest of the intervenors in offering additional information and legal theories to enhance the court’s ability to make an accurate determination of the legal and factual issues.\(^ {31}\) However, once the court has decided that the interests weigh in favor of allowing intervention, the court should seek to utilize intervention as a procedural device, and consider the evidence and legal arguments presented by the intervenors as a guide and an aid to the court.

The test for intervention as a matter of right under FRCP 24(a) requires that the intervenors be able to demonstrate that the party on whose side they wish to intervene will not adequately represent their interests.\(^ {32}\) The requirement that an intervenor must demonstrate inadequate representation is often said to be a minimal burden, but the proposed intervenor must demonstrate that its

\(^{28}\) See supra note 113.

\(^{29}\) See Defendant-Intervenors’ Final Brief, supra note 96, at 40-43 (stating that racial integration of the schools is a compelling state interest, and affirmative action is the sole means of continuing racial integration at the University of Michigan Law School).

\(^{30}\) See notes 100-108 and accompanying text; see also Defendant-Intervenors’ Final Brief, supra note 98, at 40 (“The district court never engaged with either side of the fundamentality of race – not with the students’ arguments about racism and meritocracy and not with their arguments for integration, diversity, and progress.”).

\(^{31}\) See Kennedy, supra note 123, at 334 (stating that intervention as a matter of right is a recognition by the court that the interest of the intervenors and absence of any effective outside remedy outweighs the interests of the original parties to control their own litigation).

\(^{32}\) See Trbovich v. United Mine Workers, 404 U.S. 528, 538 (1972) (requiring proposed intervenors to demonstrate that the plaintiff may inadequately represent the interests of the proposed intervenors); Goepp, supra note 38, at 140 (discussing a special standard for adequate representation when the government is a party).
interest are not identical to that of the existing parties. Thus, FRCP 24(a) contemplates and demands that intervenors will bring a unique perspective to the litigation. Despite this requirement, courts continually ignore the unique interests that the intervenors were required to have in order to gain entry to the litigation. Essentially, FRCP 24 requires that certain criteria be met for entry to the litigation, but once inside the litigation, the rules and our courts offer no answer to the intervenors’ interests and concerns. This lack of symmetry between the entrance requirements and outcome may explain why courts have lowered the standard for intervenors’ to demonstrate that their interest is not adequately represented. Perhaps the lower requirements are an acknowledgment by the courts that, although intervenors are formally allowed into the litigation, there will be little actual opportunity for them to influence the court’s decisionmaking.

A court’s lower requirements for intervention, and subsequent marginalization of the intervenor perspective, is apparent in Grutter. The Sixth Circuit, in overturning the district court’s denial of the intervenor applicant’s motion to intervene, points to the relatively low requirements for the intervenors to demonstrate that they have a substantial interest in the litigation, and that their interest in the litigation would not be adequately represented by the university defendants. The court stated:

The proposed intervenors must show that they have a substantial interest in the subject matter of this litigation. However, in this circuit we subscribe to a ‘rather expansive notion of the interest sufficient to invoke intervention of right.’ For example, an intervenor need not have the same standing necessary to initiate a lawsuit.

The court clearly separates the status and role of the intervenor from those of the plaintiff and defendant.

The courts’ awareness that intervenors need not have the same standing or interests as an actual party to the litigation leads to the intervenors being largely ignored during the actual decisionmak-

---

133 Moore, supra note 8, § 24.074[4], at 24-70 (arguing that in order to meet the inadequate representation requirement of FRCP 24(a) the proposed intervenors must show that their interests differ from the parties’ interests); Shaver, supra note 119, at 1555 (explaining that in order to meet the inadequate representation test, proposed intervenors must show that because their interests conflict with the parties’ interest, the parties will not vigorously represent their interests).

134 See supra Part I.B.

135 Grutter v. Bollinger (Grutter II), 188 F.3d 394, 398 (6th Cir. 1999) (internal citations omitted).
ing. In *Grutter*, one member of the Sixth Circuit points directly to the intervenors' status as a reason to ignore their interests.

The Law School's disavowal is why I do not discuss whether the remediation of past discrimination is a compelling state interest that could justify the Law School's actions. Not only must a state interest be compelling to satisfy strict scrutiny, but it also must be the interest that motivated the classification in the first instance.

Similarly, the Supreme Court majority opinion in *Gratz* summarily disposes of the intervenors' narrative, because it was not adopted by the university. These courts' position amounts to a demand that in the context of Equal Protection analysis, the intervenor's arguments regarding compelling state interest must be endorsed by the defendant. This requirement conflicts with the FRCP 24(a) demand that the intervenors' arguments not be adequately represented by the party on whose side they seek to intervene.

2. Assisting the Court in Information Gathering and Providing Expertise

Many commentators and courts have insisted that intervenors provide valuable assistance to the courts in public law litigation by providing additional facts and expertise needed to make the complex choices and decisions inherent in public law litigation. Intervention, under this theory, operates as a procedural device that allows courts to gather additional information not provided to them by the parties, and to receive expert testimony to assist the court in making and fair and accurate determination of the factual and legal issues. There may be information that the intervenors have that

---

137 Gratz v. Bullinger (Gratz III), 123 S. Ct. 2411, 2420 n.9 (2003) (stating that to the extent the intervenors' past discrimination argument was never asserted by the university defendant, the argument should be rejected).
138 See Edward J. Brunet, *A Study in the Allocation of Scarce Judicial Resources: The Efficiency of Federal Intervention Criteria*, 12 Ga. L. Rev. 701 (1977-1978) ("The informational input of intervenors can help the court's factfinding and law determination and thus enrich the quality of litigation."); Jones, *supra* note 7, at 42 (stating that intervention expands the information available to a court attempting to decide the merits of the lawsuit); Shreve, *supra* note 26, at 909 (1980) (explaining that courts should consider the opportunity intervention provides for the court to gather additional data and evidence to make possible a more just or accurate decision); Tobias, *supra* note 113, at 443 (noting that because the court's decision in public law litigation will have a broad impact judges will need "a broad range of expertise, information, and perspectives to render the most accurate determinations"); Vreeland, *supra* note 113, at 300 ("[I]ntervention may promote better decisions by ensuring that critical information is available to the court. The original parties will not always produce the information necessary for just and accurate results.").
the parties themselves may be incapable or uninterested in providing to the courts. Under this policy consideration, the intervenor is similar to an amicus curiae in that they are participating in the lawsuit to assist the court in its decisionmaking.

Intervention as a procedural device to aid the court in information gathering failed in the recent affirmative action cases. In Grutter, the district court, Sixth Circuit, and Supreme Court failed to significantly utilize the information given to the courts by the intervenors. The district court was the only court to address the intervenors' evidence directly. However, it failed to incorporate the evidence in its decision making process. The district court approached the intervenors' legal arguments and evidence as a completely separate and distinct from the original parties' arguments.

The district court failed to use the evidence presented by the intervenors' to aid in its determination of the central issues in the case: Whether diversity is a compelling government interest, and whether the Law School's admissions policy was narrowly tailored to meet this goal. For example, the district court concluded that the Law School's policy was not narrowly tailored because the policy failed to explain why the Law School singled out African-Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans for the policy instead of groups such as Arabs or southern and eastern Europeans who had also suffered from discrimination. The intervenors provided testimony that would explain the designation of these groups by pointing out that all three groups disproportionately reside and attend schools in impoverished areas of the United States. Instead of using the evidence presented by the intervenors to aid the court in its decisionmaking, the district court in Grutter elected to separate (segregate) the intervenors' arguments from its central decisionmaking in the case. The district court's treatment of the intervenors' arguments signals the court's failure use the intervenors' information as an integrated part of its decisionmaking process.

139 See supra notes 100-112 and accompanying text.
140 See supra note 100.
141 See supra notes 101-102 and accompanying text.
142 See supra notes 101-102 and accompanying text.
144 Id. at 851-52.
145 Id. at 864.
146 See id. at 855-56.
3. Encouraging Judicial Economy

Another policy goal for intervention is to encourage judicial economy by consolidating related issues. Similar to arguments that favor other joinder devices, such as FRCP 19 and the class action rules of FRCP 23, intervention should allow a court to address all of the facts and legal arguments surrounding an issue to prevent later litigation of related issues. In the affirmative action cases, intervention has failed to provide a resolution of the issue presented by the intervenors, thus leaving open the possibility of further litigation regarding past discrimination as a justification for race-conscious admissions policy and the alleged discriminatory effects of current admissions criteria.

In Grutter and Gratz, the intervenors and district courts expended considerable resources in the presentation of the intervenors’ unique factual and legal issues. However, due to the failure of the appellate court to fully address the intervenors arguments, those resources were wasted.

4. Adding Legitimacy to Court Decisions

Finally, intervention has also been said to lend legitimacy to the decisions of courts by allowing third party input in the process of the litigation. In Grutter and Gratz, the decisions of the trial and appellate courts were questioned by the intervenors, who argued that the courts ignored their input. In Grutter, the intervenors questioned the district court’s willingness to involve the intervenors in its decisionmaking process, stating: “The district court never engaged with either side of the fundamentality of race – not with the students’ arguments about racism and meritocracy and not

---

147 Jones, supra note 7, at 42 (stating that intervention allows courts to consolidate related issues); Shaver, supra note 119, at 1570 (explaining that commentators note that intervention assists courts in adjudicating disputes more efficiently by combining two or more claims into a single action).

148 See infra notes 169-171 and accompanying text.

149 See Tobias, supra note 113, at 444 (“In institutional reform, and much additional public law litigation, citizen participation in the form of intervention might promote governmental accountability for its decisionmaking and could make both the governmental decision and the judicial determination more palatable to those who must live with them.”); Vreeland, supra note 113, at 300 (stating that judicial decisions that affect widespread interests may be more likely to be viewed as illegitimate if courts fail to give the public a right to be heard through intervention).

150 See supra note 104 and accompanying text; see also Jeremy Berkowitz, Student Intervenors Denied Time to Give Oral Arguments to Court, MICH. DAILY, March 11, 2003, at http://www.michigandaily.com/vnews/display.v/ART/2003/04/11/3e6d7b796ff83?in_archive=1 (noting that the attorney for the Grutter intervenors criticized the Supreme Court’s denial of time for intervenors to participate in oral argument because the Court would be unable to hear crucial evidence regarding racial bias and inequality in the admissions process).
with their arguments for integration, diversity, and progress."\footnote{See Defendant-Intervenors’ Final Brief, supra note 96, at 40.}
The presence of the intervenors in the recent affirmative action cases has failed to lend legitimacy to the courts’ decisions due to the courts’ failure to sufficiently address the intervenors’ evidence and legal arguments in the decisionmaking of the cases.

B. Intervention in Higher Education Affirmative Action Litigation

In the specific context of affirmative action higher education litigation, the predominant argument regarding intervention has been that minority students have a significant vested interest in preserving affirmative action admissions programs, and intervention provides the best procedural device for minority students to protect their interest in affirmative action litigation.\footnote{See Alan Jenkins, Foxes Guarding the Chicken Coop: Intervention as of Right and the Defense of Civil Rights Remedies, 4 MICH. J. RACE & L. 263, 268-69 (1999) (stating that intervention by affirmative action beneficiaries is appropriate in most affirmative action cases, and that minority students have the only unencumbered interest in defending affirmative action policies); Jones, supra note 8, at 34 (arguing that minority interest groups should be granted intervention of right in affirmative action litigation, and that intervention has great potential to "safeguard" minority interests in defending affirmative action programs); Charles R. Lawrence III, Two Views of the River: A Critique of the Liberal Defense of Affirmative Action, 101 COLUM. L. REV. 928, 967-68 (2001) (asserting that the intervenors in the Michigan affirmative action cases are an important voice for "transformative politics" – the notion that the goal of affirmative action should ultimately be to end the subordination of people of color).}

In an article published almost twenty-five years ago, Emma Coleman Jones argued that in affirmative action litigation such as Bakke, no party in the lawsuit directly represented the interests of minority students and applicants.\footnote{Jones, supra note 7, at 31.} Jones argued that intervention is the best procedural device for correcting the absence of minority representation in higher education affirmative action cases.\footnote{Id. at 32 (arguing that intervention is one of the procedural devices available to correct the absence of minority representation in higher education affirmative action cases).}

She suggested that courts are more likely to uphold affirmative action policies if intervenors participate in the litigation as a voice for "minority-group interests."\footnote{Id. at 33.}

More recently, other commentators have identified the goals of intervention in higher education affirmative action litigation. In a recent article, Charles Lawrence states that intervenors provide a valuable critique of the "liberal defense of affirmative action," commonly known as the "diversity defense."\footnote{Lawrence, supra note 152, at 931.}

Lawrence argues that diversity has become the dominant rationale for affirmative action programs offered by universities and others attempting to
preserve affirmative action. Lawrence further asserts that the intervenors are attempting to engage in the promotion of "transformative politics" – the notion that in the debate over affirmative action, beyond the winning and losing of a particular case is the need to change political consciousness and highlight the need for the end of racial inequality. He says, "[t]he intervenors have taken a first important step in that the true victims’ voices be heard and in subverting the legal fiction that only recognizes injury to the white plaintiffs and makes the University a defender, never a violator, of minority rights."

The intervenors themselves have also identified the roles they seek to play in these cases. The intervenors view the procedural process of intervention in higher education affirmative action cases as a mechanism for promoting the end of racial inequality in society and expanding opportunities for minorities in higher education. In their view, the protection of their interests begins with voicing their unique perspective or story regarding race-conscious admissions policies during the course of the litigation.

---

157 Id. (“I argue that as diversity has emerged as the dominant defense of affirmative action in the university setting, it has pushed other, more radical substantive defenses to the background.”).

158 Charles Lawrence states:

Transformative politics requires looking beyond winning or losing the particular legal dispute or political battle and asking how one’s actions serve to reinforce people’s awareness of our interdependence and mutual responsibility as members of the human family. . . . The task is to help the privileged comprehend the profound costs associated with inequality – the public costs of prisons, crime, illiteracy, disease, and the violence of an alienated underclass – as well as the personal costs of loneliness and anomic in a world where no one is responsible for the pain of any other person.

Id. at 965-66.

159 Id. at 965.

160 Miranda Massie, U-M Students Will Turn Tide in Affirmative Action Fight, DET. FREE PRESS, Jan. 17, 2001 (quoting the attorney for the Grutter intervenors as stating "student intervenors will give questions of racial inequality, bias and unfairness their proper emphasis. The pernicious and stultifying myth of race-neutral meritocracy will finally be dispelled"); at http://www.freep.com/voices/columnists/emassl7_20010117.htm; Katie Plona, MICH. DAILY, Feb. 6, 1998, at 1 (quoting the attorney for Citizens for Affirmative Actions Preservation who explained that the intervenors “have a direct and significant interest in preserving an admissions policy that broadens access to the University, including the University’s authority to consider how a student’s racial background has affected his or her experiences”); Peter Schmidt, Minority Students Win Right to Intervene in Lawsuit Attacking Affirmative Action, CHRON. OF HIGHER EDUC., Sept. 3, 1999, at A68 (quoting the attorney for the Grutter and Gratz intervenors, stating that intervention is necessary because “[i]t has been activism by students – always – that has been responsible for the expansion of opportunity at the University of Michigan . . . . It has never been the university acting on its own”).

161 See Massie, supra note 160 ("[T]he participation of student intervenors in the case gives us a chance for something more. The trail in the U-M Law School case will change the terms of the [affirmative action] debate and will correct serious flaws in the approach of recent decisions.").
As identified by Jones, Lawrence, and the intervenors themselves, the goals of minority students and public interest groups that seek intervention in these cases are two-fold: interest goals and narrative goals. The intervenors seek to protect their interests—namely, successfully defending race-conscious admissions policies. The intervenors also have a narrative goal—to have their voices heard, and in doing so, to steer the affirmative action admissions debate in courts and in public discourse away from diversity, and instead towards remedying past discrimination and racial stratification.

The recent higher education affirmative action cases indicate that intervention is largely failing as a procedural device for providing intervenors a method to meet these two goals of protecting their interests and meaningfully conveying their unique narrative. First, in some recent higher education affirmative action cases, intervention has failed to provide intervenors with a method of protecting their interest in preserving race-conscious admissions programs for the purpose of remedying racial inequalities.

In *Hopwood*, where the Fifth Circuit struck down the race-conscious admissions policy, intervention was denied. In applying the standard for intervention as a matter of right, the district and appellate courts wrongly equated the university’s narrative with the minority students’ narrative, thus finding that the university would adequately represent the proposed intervenors’ interests. The Fifth Circuit, in viewing the university’s narrative simply as a story about the defense of a race-conscious admissions program, assumed that the university would work vigorously not to be found to have established and promoted an unconstitutional policy. The Fifth Circuit’s initial decision to deny intervention in the case was later noted by one judge on the Fifth Circuit as a key error in the court’s attempt to render a thoughtful decision on the merits of the case itself: “As to the request to intervene, what class of persons is more qualified to adduce the evidence of the present room the truth about continuing inequality and racism and bias in higher education”).

---

162 See, e.g., Defendant-Intervenors’ Brief in Support of Defendants’ Motion for Summary Judgment, supra note 89, at 1-3 (urging the court to uphold the Law School’s admissions policy).

163 See infra notes 173-75 and accompanying text.

164 See supra notes 37-44 and accompanying text.

165 *Hopwood v. Texas* (Hopwood I), 21 F.3d 603, 606 (5th Cir. 1996) (“The proposed intervenors have not demonstrated that the State will not strongly defend its affirmative action program.”).

166 Id.
effects of past discrimination than current and prospective black law students?"167

In Johnson and Gratz, although the intervenors were present in the case, the courts failed to uphold the race-conscious admissions policy.168 In both of these cases, the Eleventh Circuit and Supreme Court, respectively, found the admissions policies unconstitutional without a full consideration of the intervenors' primary contention that the race-conscious policies were justified as remedies for past discrimination at UGA and the University of Michigan.169

Intervention has also largely failed to allow the intervenors meaningful opportunity to meet their narrative goal of having their voices heard by the courts. This is evident primarily from the fact that in Johnson, Grutter, and Gratz, the courts refused to fully engage the intervenors' narrative without an endorsement of that narrative by the university defendant.170 In this way, the courts essentially demand that the intervenors' narrative be the same as the university defendant's in order for the court to recognize the narrative as one of central relevance or importance.

In Grutter and Gratz, the intervention failed to provide the intervenors with a meaningful opportunity to be heard because the courts insist that the intervenors' narrative mirror the narrative of the university defendant. In Grutter, the university refused to put forth past discrimination as a justification for its admissions policy.171 Instead, the Law School offered a drastically different vision of the advent of its admissions policy. While the intervenors claimed that the framework for the policy arose from campus pro-

167 Hopwood v. Texas (Hopwood III), 84 F.3d 720, 725 (5th Cir. 1996) (Stewart, J., dissenting).
168 See Johnson v. Bd. of Regents Univ. of Ga. (Johnson II), 263 F.3d 1234, 1244 (11th Cir. 2001) (affirming the district court’s finding that UGA’s race-conscious admissions policy was unconstitutional); Gratz v. Bollinger (Gratz III), 123 S. Ct. 2411, 2417 (2003) (holding that LSA’s admissions policy violated both the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment and Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act).
169 See Johnson II, 263 F.3d at 1264 (dismissing in one paragraph the intervenors’ past discrimination contention); Gratz III, 123 S. Ct. at 2420 n.9 (rejecting in a single footnote the intervenors’ argument that LSA’s programs had a remedial justification).
170 See Johnson II, 263 F.3d at 1264 (stating that there was little persuasive evidence in the record to support a remedial justification, in part because UGA rejected the position that its policy was motivated by a need to remediate past discrimination); Gratz III, 123 S. Ct. at 2420 n.9 (“The District Court considered and rejected respondent-intervenors’ [past discrimination] arguments .... We agree, and to the extent respondent-intervenors reassert this justification, a justification the University has never asserted throughout the course of this litigation, we affirm the District Court’s disposition of the issue.”).
171 See Grutter v. Bollinger (Grutter IV), 288 F.3d 732, 735 (6th Cir. 2002) (“The Law School contends that its interest in achieving a diverse student body is compelling .... The Intervenors offer an additional justification for the Law School’s consideration of race and ethnicity – remedying past discrimination.”).
tests by African-American students to encourage “educational equality,” the Law School claimed that the admissions policy arose solely from the Law School’s commitment to enroll students with different perspectives.  

Also, in contrast to the intervenors’ evidence regarding past discrimination, the Law School offered no testimony regarding past racial or ethnic discrimination by the Law School or the University of Michigan. The Law School instead presented evidence focused solely on diversity as a justification for affirmative action. The Law School presented the testimony of current and former University of Michigan professors and administrators to testify about the pedagogical value of diversity, and the focus of the admissions policy to admit a diverse class without the use of quotas. The Law School also presented detailed testimony regarding the 1992 admissions policy at issue in the lawsuit. Furthermore, the law school presented an expert witness to statistically substantiate the Law School’s claim that no quota or numerical goal was used in the admissions policy.  

The Law School’s refusal to adopt the intervenors’ past discrimination analysis may be explained by several factors. First, the Law School claimed that the faculty committee that conceived of the policy, and later, the full faculty that adopted the admissions policy, never considered past discrimination as a justification for the admissions policy. Instead, as stated in the policy itself, the Law School claimed that the policy was solely justified by the Law School’s goal “to admit a group of students who individually and collectively are among the most capable students applying to American law schools in a given year. . . . Collectively, we seek a mix of students with varying backgrounds and experiences who will respect and learn from each other.” The Law School policy

172 Id. at 737 (“Professor Richard Lempert, the chair of the faculty committee that drafted the admissions policy, explained that the Law School’s commitment to such diversity was not intended as a remedy for past discrimination, but as a means of including students who may bring a different perspective to the Law School.”).  

173 See Grutter v. Bollinger (Grutter III), 137 F. Supp. 2d 821, 829-36 (E.D. Mich. 2001) (giving a detailed recount of witnesses presented by the Law School, all of whom testified regarding admissions procedure or the development of admissions policy to foster a diverse student body).  

174 See id.  

175 See id.  

176 See id.  

177 See id.  

178 See id.
also specifically indicates an emphasis on racial and ethnic diversity:

There is, however, a commitment to one particular type of diversity that the school has long had and which should continue. This is a commitment to racial and ethnic diversity with special reference to the inclusion of students from groups which have been historically discriminated against, like African-Americans, Hispanics and Native Americans, who without this commitment might not be represented in our student body in meaningful numbers. These students are particularly likely to have experiences and perspectives of special importance to our mission. 179

Based on the text of the 1992 admissions policy itself, and the testimony of the Law School administrators and faculty that developed the policy, there can be little doubt that the goal of maintaining racial and ethnic diversity was a motivating factor in the development of the 1992 admissions policy. However, it is also just as likely that the Law School began considering race and ethnicity as factors in its admissions policy as a direct response to both societal discrimination and discrimination by the University of Michigan itself. As mentioned in the Law School policy, by the time the 1992 admissions policy was developed, the Law School “over the past two decades” preceding the 1992 policy was already making efforts to increase the numbers of certain minority groups at the Law School. The Law School’s use of race and ethnicity as considerations in admissions traces back to 1966. 180 In 1975, the Law School adopted a formal admissions policy stating that the Law School should seek to enroll African-Americans, Hispanic students, and Native Americans as 10-12% of the entering class. The reason stated for this numerical goal was that “the Law School recognizes the racial imbalance now existing in the legal profession and the public interest in increasing the number of lawyers from ethnic and cultural minorities significantly underrepresented in the profession.” 181

179 Id. at 827-28 (quoting the University of Michigan Law School’s 1992 Admissions Policy).

180 See id. at 831 n.8. The district court referenced a trial exhibit entitled “The History of Special Admissions at the University of Michigan Law School, 1966-81.” This document recounts the history of the Law School’s efforts to enroll minority students. In 1966, the Law School faculty began to give preference to African-American students and students from “disadvantaged backgrounds” for admissions off the waiting list due to the faculty’s concern about the small numbers of African-American students enrolling at the Law School. Id.

181 Id. at 830 (quoting the University of Michigan Law School’s 1988-89 Law School Announcement).
The Law School's initial focus on the need to address "racial imbalance" in the legal profession is much more closely akin to the argument that race-conscious admissions policies are needed to cure societal discrimination. Curing racial imbalance is not an attempt to improve the classroom environment or capitalize on different perspectives that may be offered by students of certain racial and ethnic minority groups. Instead, the Law School was attempting to correct numerical differences in the numbers of minorities attending the Law School and joining the legal profession. This original statement of purpose by the Law School resembles the intervenors' claims that the current consideration of race by the Law School is necessary to insure that the Law School does not become "resegregated." In the intervenors' current narrative, and the previous incarnations of the Law School's admissions policies, preventing resegregation and ending racial imbalance is a goal unto itself, separate from creating a racially diverse law school environment.

Therefore, looking at the Law School's admissions policy from a broader perspective demonstrates that diversity was not the only justification for the Law School's use of race in its admissions program. The Law School's abandonment of the past discrimination rationale may be explained by a number of considerations. The Law School, in its litigation strategy, may have concluded that a past discrimination rationale was unlikely to provide a sufficient basis for the courts to find the use of race met the requirements of the Equal Protection Clause. In affirmative action cases over the last quarter century, the Supreme Court has consistently rejected remedying general societal discrimination as a justification for the use of race in admissions, hiring, and government contracting. \(^{182}\)

The courts in Johnson, Grutter, and Gratz also failed to acknowledge another reason that the university defendant would avoid adopting the intervenors' past discrimination narrative, namely because this story implicates the university in past and ongoing racial discrimination. \(^{183}\)

The argument can be made, however, that while the intervenors' narrative was never adopted by any of the courts deciding Grutter or Gratz, aspects of the intervenors' narrative were heard, because elements of the narrative were interwoven in the Supreme


183 See Lawrence, supra note 152, at 956 ("Perhaps the University's rejection of the remedial defense can be explained by its concern that by admitting its own discriminatory practices it would expose itself to liability vis-a-vis minority applicants and students.").
Court’s decisions. Although not attributed to the intervenors, Justice Ginsburg’s concurrence in Grutter adopts a similar perspective to that of the intervenors’ narrative regarding the unitary nature of a state’s educational system by highlighting the place of affirmative action in society’s attempt to equalize educational opportunity for students of all races and ethnicities.  

Justice Ginsburg argued that the majority’s observation that “race-conscious programs” must have a “logical end point” will be more of a consideration over the next generation as society makes progress towards nondiscrimination and “genuinely equal opportunity.” Similar to the arguments made by the intervenors regarding the need for race-conscious solutions to remedy continuing racial discrimination, Justice Ginsburg noted that currently “conscious and unconscious race bias, even rank discrimination based on race, remain alive in our land, impeding realization of our highest values and ideals.”

Justice Ginsburg also cited statistics that are reflective of the unitary education aspect of the intervenors’ narrative. Justice Ginsburg recognized that as of 2000-2001, 71.6% of African-American children and 76.3% of Hispanic children attended a school in which minorities made up a majority of the student body, and that “many minority students encounter markedly inadequate and unequal educational opportunities.” Justice Ginsburg only connected her evidence regarding segregation and inequality in elementary and secondary schools with her argument that the time has not yet arrived to sunset affirmative action programs. Thus, while Justice Ginsburg did not acknowledge the intervenors’ narrative related to current discrimination and the inequality of educational opportunities as a basis for the Law School’s affirmative action, these elements are present in her concurrence, providing some recognition of the intervenors’ perspective.

The intervenors’ narrative theme of the inherent unfairness of the use of LSAT scores as dominant admissions criteria also found recognition in the dissent of Justice Thomas. Justice Thomas rejected the majority opinion’s conclusion that the Law School’s use of race in admissions leads to educational benefits for all stu-

---

185 Id.
186 Id. at 2347-48.
187 Id. at 2348.
188 See id. at 2360-61 (“The Law School’s continued adherence to [the LSAT] it knows produce[s] racially skewed results is not entitled to deference by this Court.”).
Justice Thomas critiqued the concept of selective admissions, stating “there is nothing ancient, honorable, or constitutionally protected about ‘selective’ admissions.” He argued that law schools have known that African-American students perform relatively worse on the LSAT than Caucasian students, yet the law schools continue to use the test as an admissions criteria, and then consider race to “correct for black underperformance by using racial discrimination in admissions so as to obtain their aesthetic student body.”

This argument is similar to the one made by the intervenors regarding the use of the LSAT and GPA. The intervenors argued that the use of the LSAT, without adding the explicit consideration of race, amounts to a racially biased admissions system. The intervenors also presented testimony that attempted to demonstrate that the LSAT is racially biased. At bottom, much of the intervenors’ questioning of the use of the LSAT and GPA is an attack on the current system of selective admissions. The intervenors are essentially stating that the current “neutral” selective admissions criteria are unable to stand alone without the consideration of race. Although the intervenors would obviously disagree with Justice Thomas’s conclusion that it is constitutionally impermissible to consider race in admissions, Justice Thomas’s dissent recognizes one of the intervenors’ narrative strands that questions...
other aspects of current admissions systems beyond the use of race.

III. CLAIMING NARRATIVE HIGHGROUND: ADDRESSING THE FAILURE OF INTERVENTION AS A PROCEDURAL DEVICE

Intervention has failed as a procedural device in the recent higher education affirmative action cases.\textsuperscript{196} The general policy goals underlying intervention have not been met in these cases, and the benefits of intervention said to attach in affirmative action cases have failed to materialize.\textsuperscript{197} For these reasons, minority students and public interest organizations that have served as intervenors in these cases should abandon intervention as a procedural device in the continuing legal and public debate surrounding higher education admissions policies.

Several important issues in the area of higher education admissions policies remain unresolved by the Supreme Court’s holdings in \textit{Grutter} and \textit{Gratz}.\textsuperscript{198} \textit{Grutter} and \textit{Gratz} did not answer the question of whether public universities may employ race-conscious remedies in order to remedy past segregation.\textsuperscript{199} Also, the Supreme Court failed to address the \textit{Grutter} and \textit{Gratz} intervenors’ argument that a public university has an affirmative duty under the Equal Protection Clause to prevent the resegregation that would result if the university relies primarily on standardized test scores and GPA as admissions criteria.\textsuperscript{200} The recent cases also did not address whether a race-conscious admission policy may be justified to remedy ongoing de facto segregation in a state’s elementary and secondary school system.\textsuperscript{201} Because all of these issues remain unresolved in the area of higher education admissions policy, minority students and public interest groups committed to the resolution of these lingering questions must consider alternatives to intervention.

\textsuperscript{196} See supra notes 168-80 and accompanying text.
\textsuperscript{197} See supra notes 168-80 and accompanying text.
\textsuperscript{198} See Margaret Graham Tebo, \textit{New Frontier for Affirmative Action}, 2 No. 25 A.B.A.J. E-REP. 3 (June 27, 2003), WL 2 No. 25 ABAJEREP 3 (stating that while \textit{Grutter} resolved the issue of whether diversity is a compelling government interest, many of the questions in the affirmative action area remain unresolved).
\textsuperscript{199} See \textit{Gratz} v. Bollinger (\textit{Gratz II}), 123 S. Ct. 2411, 2420 n.9 (2003) (stating that the Court affirmed the district court’s rejection of the intervenors’ argument that LSA’s race-conscious admission program was justified by past discrimination because the University failed to offer past discrimination as a justification for the program).
\textsuperscript{200} See id.
\textsuperscript{201} See id; see also Lawrence, supra note 152, at 946 (arguing that establishing “subordinated minority children” as plaintiffs in a recent lawsuit places “the victims of racism at the center” of the admission debate).
As one method of reversing systemic racial inequality, minority students and public interest groups advocating race-conscious admissions policies should consider becoming plaintiffs in lawsuits against public universities to challenge current admissions policies. While these cases may ultimately prove unsuccessful on their merits, the position as "plaintiff" will afford a better opportunity to be heard than the opportunity provided through the procedure of intervention. Similar to the litigation strategy adopted by Caucasian plaintiffs in the affirmative action cases, a minority student, after being rejected from a state university would file suit against the university challenging its admissions policy.

There is a growing movement among legal scholars and educators that questions the validity of standardized tests as legitimate admissions criteria. Presumably the university's admissions program at issue in the lawsuit would be primarily based on the use of standardized tests and GPAs to admit students. The rejected minority applicant would argue that the use of standardized testing and GPA as the predominant factor in admissions violates the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.

---

202 See Lawrence, supra note 152, at 943-46 (describing a class action suit brought against the University of California at Berkeley because of admissions policies that relied on GPA and standardized test scores, as an example of plaintiffs challenging "race-neutral" admissions policies).

203 See supra Part II (discussing the failure of intervention to provide a meaningful opportunity for the minority students' narrative to be heard).

204 See sources cited infra note 205.

205 Richard Delgado, Official Elitism or Institutional Self-Interest? 10 Reasons Why UC-Davis Should Abandon the LSAT (and Why Other Good Law Schools Should Follow Suit), 34 U.C. DAVIS L. REV. 593, 594-95 (2001) (arguing that standardized testing is primarily a lucrative business for testing corporations instead of a measure for academic success); Erika Dowdell, Accessing Higher Education as a Multiracial Movement, 27 N.Y.U. REV. L. & SOC. CHANGE 5, 23 n.15 (2001-02) (noting that according to professor Gerald Torres, researchers have found that students who would have been rejected for admission if considering only GPA or standardized tests are outperforming expectations when admitted under admissions policies that do not consider standardized test scores); Matthew L.M. Fletcher, The Legal Fiction of Standardized Testing, 21 LAW & INEQ. J. 397 (2003) (challenging the use of standardized tests through the narrative of minority students); Lani Guinier & Susan Sturm, The Future of Affirmative Action: Reclaiming the Innovative Ideal, 84 CAL. L. REV. 953, 965 (1996) ("In fact, the dominance of standardized tests in selection is a relatively recent development. The civil rights revolution, and the introduction of affirmative action programs, occurred at the same time that society was formalizing a 'meritocracy' based on education and standardized testing."); Lawrence, supra note 146, at 945 (arguing that the University of California at Berkeley's admissions procedures rely on standardized tests in a determinative and exclusionary way).


207 See Lawrence, supra note 152, at 943-46 (describing a class action suit brought against the University of California at Berkeley because of admissions policies that relied on GPA and standardized test scores, as an example of plaintiffs challenging "race-neutral" admissions poli-
argument regarding the inappropriate use of the LSAT and GPA as admissions standards has already begun to be litigated. Justice Thomas noted in his dissent in *Grutter* that:

The Law School’s continued adherence to measures it knows produce racially skewed results is not entitled to deference . . . [because the] Law School itself admits that the test is imperfect . . . [and an] infinite variety of admissions methods are available to the Law School. Considering all of the radical thinking that has historically occurred at this country’s universities, the Law Schools’ intractable approach toward admissions is striking.\(^\text{208}\)

If the university has an admissions policy like that of the University of Michigan Law School, in which race is a consideration in admissions, the student could also seek a declaratory judgment that the university’s race-conscious admissions program should be expanded. The minority student should argue that race-conscious admissions programs must be expanded in order to serve not just as a method of creating diversity in the school’s enrollment, but also as a method of remedying past discrimination and ongoing racial discrimination in the state education system.\(^\text{209}\)

Some obvious barriers exist to the success of a lawsuit constructed under these legal theories. First, in regard to the use of the LSAT and GPA as admissions criteria, while there may be gaps in LSAT scores and GPAs that correlate with race, these criteria on their face are race-neutral. Also, the advent of the use of standardized tests and GPA as admissions criteria may not be traceable to a racially based motive. Therefore, an Equal Protection challenge to these admissions criteria will likely be subject to rational basis review.\(^\text{210}\) Under rational basis review, courts will ask only whether the university has a rational basis for employing

\(^{208}\) *Grutter V*, 123 S. Ct. at 2360-61.

\(^{209}\) See supra notes 96-99 and accompanying text.

\(^{210}\) Plaintiffs in recent affirmative action cases have also claimed a cause of action under Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. See, e.g., *Gratz III*, 123 S. Ct. 2411, 2417 (2003). The analysis of a Title VI violation is identical to analysis under the Equal Protection Clause. See *Grutter V*, 123 S. Ct. at 2347 (citing Regents of the Univ. of Cal. v. Bakke, 438 U.S. 265, 287 (1978)). Prior to 2001, under regulations promulgated under Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, private plaintiffs could challenge governmental actions which had a disparate impact based on race, national origin, or ethnicity. In 2001, the Supreme Court held that these disparate impact regulations may not be enforced through a private right of action. *Alexander v. Sandoval*, 532 U.S. 275, 293 (2001). Therefore, potential minority student plaintiffs will likely not have a separate Title VI disparate impact challenge to facially neutral admissions criteria. *But see* William C. Kidder & Jay Rosner, *How the SAT Creates “Built-In Headwinds”: An Educational and Legal Analysis of Disparate Impact*, 43 SANTA CLARA L. REV. 131, 177 (2002) (describing a viable disparate impact challenge to the use of standardized tests).
standardized tests and GPA as admissions criteria.\textsuperscript{211} The university’s obvious justification will be that standardized tests and GPA are the best predictors for academic success, although not the only useful predictors.\textsuperscript{212} Rational basis review is unlikely to allow a successful constitutional challenge to a university’s use of LSATs and GPAs and admissions criteria would be successful.\textsuperscript{213} Also, the Supreme Court’s opinion in \textit{Grutter} makes it clear that universities should be given deference to determine the admissions criteria that best allow the university to meet its institutional goals.\textsuperscript{214}

A student seeking a declaratory judgment that a public university’s race-conscious admissions program is justified based on past discrimination will also face difficulties. First, both the district courts in \textit{Grutter} and \textit{Gratz}, the Sixth Circuit in \textit{Grutter}, and the Supreme Court in \textit{Gratz} emphasized the reason for the race-conscious admissions policy given at the time the policy was adopted.\textsuperscript{215} Therefore, even if the minority plaintiff came forward with an alternative factual background for the adoption of the race-conscious admissions policy, it is unclear whether a court would require the university to publicly adopt a specific justification for the program. The minority plaintiff would likely need to seek a declaratory judgment that the university should adopt a more expansive race-conscious policy then the policy already in place in order to remedy the university’s past discrimination. A model for this would be found in desegregation cases in which states were required by court order or administrative order to adopt affirmative measures to desegregate a school system.\textsuperscript{216}

\textsuperscript{211} See Lawrence v. Texas, 123 S. Ct. 2472, 2495 (2003) (citing Washington v. Davis, 426 U.S. 229, 241-42 (1976)) (stating that a facially race-neutral policy with no discriminatory intent is subject to “rational basis” review); Robert C. Post & Reva B. Siegel, Legislative Constitutionalism and Section Five Power: Policentric Interpretation of the Family and Medical Leave Act, 112 YALE L.J. 1943, 1961 n.65 (2003) (citing Katzenbach v. McClung, 379 U.S. 294, 303-04 (1964)) (describing rational basis review); James E. Ryan, The Limited Influence of Social Science Evidence in Modern Desegregation Cases, 81 N.C. L. REV. 1659, 1694 (2003) (stating that a policy which is facially neutral, with no finding of discriminatory intent, will be subject to rational basis review, which is typically simple to satisfy).

\textsuperscript{212} See \textit{Grutter V}, 123 S. Ct. at 2332 (stating that Law School admissions officials must consider LSAT scores as admissions criteria, because they are “important (if imperfect) predictors of academic success in law school”).

\textsuperscript{213} See sources cited supra note 211; see also Kidder & Rosner, supra note 210, at 173 (2002) (stating that an Equal Protection Clause challenge to the use of standardized tests is likely a dead end, but describing a viable disparate impact challenge to the use of standardized tests).

\textsuperscript{214} See \textit{Grutter V}, 123 S. Ct. at 2339 (stating that the Court’s holding is in keeping with the Court’s deference to a university’s academic decisions).

\textsuperscript{215} See sources cited supra notes 174-78.

\textsuperscript{216} See e.g., Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Bd. of Educ., 402 U.S. 1, 7-10 (1971); Green v. County School Bd. of New Kent County, 391 U.S. 430, 439 (1968).
The advantage to minority students and public interest organizations in abandoning intervention in favor of becoming plaintiffs is that plaintiffs have expansive rhetorical, narrative advantages.\textsuperscript{217} Despite the claim that in public law litigation, intervention provides a method for the protection of third-party interests, the treatment by the courts of the intervenors in the recent affirmative action education cases demonstrates that may courts confronted with public law litigation continue to treat the litigation as a bipolar enterprise. The courts allow the plaintiff and defendant the powerful narrative tool of shaping the framework of the litigation, both in evidence and legal arguments. By becoming plaintiffs in lawsuits against university defendants, minority students would be able to assume this narrative highground. The courts making decisions in these cases would be forced to confront and engage the arguments put forth by minority students. Even if ultimately unsuccessful in the litigation, the minority students and public interest groups advocating further change in admissions programs would be practically no worse off than they are today, in the sense that although the universities would still use LSAT and GPA as predominant admissions criteria, race-conscious remedies would also remain in place.

Due to the obvious barriers to successful litigation regarding admissions criteria, and the use of race-conscious remedies to remedy past discrimination, other alternatives should be explored by minority students seeking to gain narrative highground. One method that has proven to be successful for advocates interested in transforming admissions policies is the use of legislative alternatives. In Texas, after the \textit{Hopwood} decision that ended the use of traditional race-conscious admissions policies, minority legislators developed an alternative admissions program called the Texas Ten Percent Plan.\textsuperscript{218} The Texas Ten Percent Plan allows for students

\textsuperscript{217}See Lawrence, supra note 152, at 946-47 (arguing that the idea of minorities serving as plaintiffs in lawsuits against universities regarding admissions policies has strong rhetorical value by giving voice to a different view of what constitutes equality and justice); see also Kidder \& Rosner, supra note 210, at 143 (suggesting a litigation strategy for minority students to challenge the use of standardized testing).

graduating in the top ten percent from a Texas high school to be automatically admitted to any college or university in the state.\textsuperscript{219} The minority legislators also succeeded in revolutionizing the debate surrounding admissions criteria in general, by shifting the focus of the admissions policy away from standardized testing.\textsuperscript{220} Furthermore, the adoption of the Texas Ten Percent Plan allowed the legislature to examine the state’s higher education system as a continuation of the state’s efforts to create equal quality education at the elementary and secondary school levels.\textsuperscript{221} These goals are similar to the goals of the students and public interest groups that have become intervenors in the recent affirmative action education cases.

Drafting and advocating legislation that would advocate less reliance on standardized testing as an admissions criteria would serve as a direct narrative contrast to opponents of race-conscious remedies who have used ballot initiatives in California and Washington to end the use of race-conscious remedies in those states.\textsuperscript{222} Additionally, legislative action to specifically acknowledge that the use of race-conscious policies in admissions is justified by the state’s commitment to remedying past discrimination and ending ongoing segregation in secondary and elementary education echoes other recent movements by civil rights organizations, such as the racial reconciliation and reparations movement.

\textsuperscript{219} See William E. Forbath & Gerald Torres, Merit and Diversity After Hopwood, 10 STAN. L. & POL’Y REV. 185 (1999) (detailing criteria of the Texas Ten Percent Plan); Holley & Spencer, supra note 218, at 245 (describing requirements of the Texas Ten Percent Plan).

\textsuperscript{220} See Holley & Spencer, supra note 218, at 260 (arguing that through the adoption of the Texas Ten Percent Plan, the Texas legislature sought to redefine “merit” as separate from standardized test scores).

\textsuperscript{221} Charles Lawrence explains:

By treating the top students at each of the state’s schools as “most qualified,” the University takes responsibility for existing discriminatory conditions in a state where most schools are still racially segregated and unequally financed, training future leaders from oppressed and underserved communities, and challenging the state to make its separate and unequal schools equal.

Lawrence, supra note 152, at 969; see also Holley & Spencer, supra note 218, at 262 (stating that the Texas Ten Percent Plan places emphasis on equalizing the quality of secondary school education because the state is further motivated by the need to prepare students for higher education). \textit{But see} Michelle Adams, \textit{Isn’t It Ironic: The Central Paradox at the Heart of “Percentage Plans,”} 62 OHIO ST. L.J. 1729 (2001) (asserting that percentage plans diversify higher education through a continued reliance of segregated elementary and secondary schools).

\textsuperscript{222} See generally Lawrence, supra note 152, at 952-56 (recounting the California ballot initiative and minority student organization to repeal the anti-affirmative action amendment).
CONCLUSION

Through intervention, minority students and public interest groups have sought not only to preserve race-conscious admissions policies on their merits, but also to gain recognition for their unique narrative. The minority students’ narrative, which presents race-conscious admissions policies as a method of ending continuing racial inequality and offsetting the negative impact of admissions criteria such as the LSAT, has remained at the margins in higher education affirmative action litigation. In order for this narrative to gain narrative force, minority students must shift away from their procedural posture as intervenors towards becoming plaintiffs in litigation or proponents of legislation that revolutionizes higher education admissions criteria.