opinion

Affirmative action is key to the equality of minorities

(Continued from page 4)

In order to alleviate the problems of underrepresented minorities, it is necessary to give them advantages, allowing their representation at schools such as MIT to grow. The preference will benefit society. The women scientists will be a good role model for her two daughters. The black engineer will raise a family in an environment of hope, not one of despair.

Many argue against the need for affirmative action by citing specific examples of successful minorities. Wealthy minority families exist, but these cases are not representative of the minority population as a whole. There is also justification for giving preference to all minority students in order to diversify the population. Although affirmative action may seem unfair in individual cases, when looking at the population as a whole it is fair.

Now is a crucial time for affirmative action. This year, the Supreme Court will decide three cases that could reshape affirmative action. In all three cases, the Reagan administration's Justice Department is favoring white employees over minorities hired under affirmative action programs.

The Justice Department's stand is not surprising. The administration recently announced that the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has abandoned affirmative action, its main weapon in the fight for equal employment. The administration has also turned the Civil Rights Administration into an organization largely concerned with the civil rights of whites. Reagan fought the extension of the Voting Rights Act. The administration also tried to give segregated schools tax-exempt status.

The fight against affirmative action is only one front of an overall war against minority equality. The loss of affirmative action would be a national tragedy. It would encourage prejudice in the job market and would relegate minorities to the role of second-class citizens forever.