

I'm asian, not "asian"

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College admission officers takes a number of factors into account before coming to an informed, though seemingly random to many students, decision to either reject or accept an applicant. Every College Confidential obsessed high schooler such as myself is aware that these key factors are grades, standardized test scores, recommendations, extracurriculars, and the college essay.

These are all factors that I can deal with because, for the most part, I control my grades, how my teachers perceive me, what activities I partake in, and what I choose to write about. Whether or not people are satisfied with who we are, we also choose a significant portion of our personality which is reflected in what we do and say and who we associate with. If a college does not accept me because it does not think that my personality matches up with that of the school's, I will be entirely okay with that. If my dream school rejects me because my grades were too low, I am still okay with that. Sure, I would wish they had taken some other things into account but at the end of it all, a school is a school.

A place where we grow as people and where we expand our minds- if my grades were not good enough for a school it means I should not go there because it would be even more difficult to keep up with the rigor of that college than high school. I can accept all of these things. What I cannot accept is how one little square box can make or break my chances. The ethnicity box. I'm a US born Indian girl. I have yet to visit India, learn to make dahl, have a 4.

0 gpa, or meet any of my relatives outside of my immediately family, but don't be misled- because I am 100% Indian. In case you are in need of a brief geography lesson, India is a subcontinent of South Asia. Now if you look very closely at a college application, you will see under " Check your ethnicity" that there is no option that states " Subcontinent of South Asia" or in short, not even " India." This is understandable given that no country has its own box. The options given are: Hispanic/Latino, American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian (including Indian subcontinent and Phillipines), Black, Pacific Islander, and White. It is clear from the choices that I should be marking myself as " Asian including Indian subcontinent and Phillipines," but I do not mark myself as such.

This is because marking myself as Asian will in fact lower my chances of getting into college. Asians need to be above average to get into an average school over a white person because of stereotypes of the Asian Nerd or the Straight " A" sian. When I check that box that says Asian including Indian subcontinent and Phillipines, college sees one thing and that is " Asian." I am no longer an Indian American, but I am a Chinese student to colleges. Or a Japanese student. Maybe a Korean student.

Or any other mainstream Central Asian that college wants to box me as. We all perpetuate the stereotype of the straight " A" sian whether we want to or not. When we say " All Asians are smart" we are actually invalidating an Asian's success in school. We are automatically attributing that success to race rather than hard work. Colleges are especially guilty of these generalizations as they view all Asians as part of some highly academic, virtually perfect and abundant group that the college could simply pick from <https://assignbuster.com/im-asian-not-asian/>

randomly to sprinkle on their campus for “ diversity.” So many colleges only admit Asian students if they are lacking a bit in their Asian statistics and if those students have a 5.

0 gpa, perfect SAT score, and impressive extracurriculars. As teenagers, we make jokes about how Asians have no social life and how they only care about grades, which is completely not true. Asians just have to work twice as hard to even be considered acceptable to college because of the large Asian population in America. The reason that I don't mark myself as Asian is not only because I don't want to be compared to super scoring Asians, but because I don't want to be some token ambiguous “ asian.” If the colleges that boasted their diversity, really did care about having an equal mixing, they would not just say “ 20% student body Asian” on their website. The ways that college celebrates diversity on campus is through ethnicity clubs, educational events, and anything else that reflects a group's culture.

My Indian culture is so much different than Chinese culture or Korean culture or any other Central Asian culture. The food is different, the language is different, the racial experience is different, the appearances are very much different. My main point is: a college can have 20% of its student body be Asian, but there is a high chance that only 10% of those students are from South Asia. South Asians and Central Asians are not interchangeable peoples, but to colleges we are both just academically achieving minorities. A college might see an Asian applicant (who is Indian) and a white applicant with identical numbers but reject the Indian (who as far as they are concerned by the box is Asian) because the school already has 500 Asian students (99% of whom are Central Asian).

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What I would ethnically offer to a college is very different from what a Korean student may offer to a college. If colleges really did care about cultural diversity and not just website statistics, then maybe they would recognize the cultural differences between central and south asian and how we need separate boxes. Until then, I'm unchecked.