

# The ivy league: full of stereotypes

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Why this group of prestigious colleges represents a major problem in our society “ The Ivy League.

” Sure, the name itself triggers sentiments of glory and selectivity, not to mention the stamp of earning a world-renowned education. However, what does getting accepted into these colleges really mean? Factors Beyond Our Control It is widely known that colleges not only look at grades and involvement, but also race, family income, and alumni relation. As far as race goes, diversity is great, but random discrimination isn’t. Hispanics and Blacks are stereotyped as underprivileged people who had to struggle through racial discrimination and financial deprivation to succeed. On the other hand, Asians are supposed to be highly intelligent, award-winning musicians with nearly perfect grades and test scores. However, if an African American happens to be a first chair violinist, captain of the chess team, and the school’s record-breaking diver, his resume will most likely catch the eye of an admissions officer.

Why? Simply put, he doesn’t fit the stereotypical African American student profile. Like other ambitious students, I have also talked to my parents about earning an Ivy League education. During one conversation, my dad proposed leaving his well paying middle-of-the-road job and working at Wal-Mart. Out of curiosity, I asked him why he wanted to do such a preposterous thing. He replied, “ I just don’t want to see you get rejected because I don’t make enough money to shower those colleges with endowments every year.

Maybe less income combined with your high school accomplishments will give you an edge.” My friends have suggested that I indicate “ other” when

filling out my race on the college application. Why? That way, I won't be stereotyped against during the application review process. Let's Show ' Em Who We Are One college fair after another, we're told that we need to make ourselves stand out because colleges want an " interesting and diverse group of students." Since three numbers separated by a dot and four other numbers reveal nothing as to a student's personality, the essay is often used to determine if a student is indeed " interesting.

" A problem is that the meaning of " interesting" is subjective. What one reader considers " interesting" might be radical for another and vice versa. I don't suppose there is a rubric to determine who meets the " interesting" criteria... Moreover, the subject matter is also heavily stereotyped against. An article I recently read advised me to avoid writing about the death of a loved one, a traveling experience or a controversial social issue. I certainly can't write about my personal accomplishments, as it would give the reader the impression that I'm a solipsistic applicant. Given limited choices, I would have to magically tell the colleges about myself without submitting an autobiography.

An Act of Realization How " elite" is a university really when all it does is reinforce the stereotypes students are taught against? Parents shouldn't have to come across the thought that switching jobs would be beneficial for their child's education. Similarly, failing to indicate ' race' on an application shouldn't stem out of fear for rejection. Two students with analogous statistics should both be accepted instead of just one due to an uncontrollable factor, such as race or alumni relation. By no means am I suggesting that students who get accepted don't deserve it; they have <https://assignbuster.com/the-ivy-league-full-of-stereotypes/>

worked equally hard and have managed to dodge the stereotype pertinent to them. However, thousands of students don't get rejected every year from these "highly selective" colleges because they don't possess caliber. The reasoning goes much beyond that; it conveys the fact that stereotyping is still an active and dominant problem in our society that affects millions of students every year.