

I am 1600

Business



Once again, society's inability to comprehend the minds of today's youth is consequently inhibiting teenagers' lives. This is not the age-old cry of "no one understands us" but rather a call to awaken society's perception of a drawn out and obsolete tradition. The SAT. This standardized test lacks a true value of intelligence and is bias against minorities, as well as people of lower economic status, yet today's society places so much dependence on this unreliable test. In order to recognize the consequences of the SAT, it is important to understand the test itself. By the standards of psychometrics, a test must consist of two things: validity and reliability.

Validity- considered to be the most important trait of a test- is defined as the degree in which a test truly measures what it intends on testing, while reliability is defined as consistency. In relevance to these two traits, it is actually scientifically proven that standardized testing does not have the ability to measure one's overall intelligence. Don't believe me? I have proof. Let's just look at a psychology excerpt from Britannica Encyclopedia in which psychologist Dorothy C. Adkins concludes, "Such abstract properties or attributes as intelligence or introversion can never be directly measured." In this sense, no test can accurately measure overall intelligence or academic success because intelligence is not based on a single factor.

Math and verbal skills- the characteristics measured by the SAT- are simply just a small component tested. However, non-cognitive traits such as creativity, perseverance, or other personal characteristics also play significant roles in our intelligence yet are not measured through standardized testing. Not only does the SAT fail to test crucial parts of our intelligence, but the characteristics that the test actually measures have

proven to be irrelevant as well. A study conducted by ABC News reporter John Allen concludes that there is significantly low correlation between test results and students' GPAs as " only 10 percent to 20 percent of the variation in first-year [college] GPAs is explained by SAT scores." This correlation is strikingly low especially considering the fact that the SAT is considered an aptitude test- which is supposed to measure a students' future potential. This is most likely due to the fact that students often cram information into their brain then regurgitate it while taking the test and quickly forget all of it when it is not needed anymore.

While there is only about 10% correlation between test results and peoples' GPAs, the likelihood of SAT scores having any relevance to one's intelligence for future careers or life at all is unlikely. The SAT is also proven to be bias against minorities or those of lower socioeconomic status, which creates an unfair disadvantage to those students who had absolutely no control over the situation they were born into. New York Times columnist Catherine Rampbell studied students' SAT scores in families of higher income compared to those of lower income and the students of lower economic status often had significantly lower scores. It was found that students whose family income was over \$100, 000 received scores approximately 100 points higher in every section than students whose family income was \$20, 000 or less. This reflects the idea that those of higher socioeconomic status have a greater opportunity in succeeding in the SAT because of greater opportunities seen through the expenses of private tutoring and practice, or also the ability to take the SAT several times if you can afford it. Similarly, the SAT is bias against different races and ethnic groups.

This is shown, as many people living in America did not speak English as their first language, yet it is such a prominent section in the SAT, which is detrimental to the students' scores. As recorded by the U. S. Department of Education in 2013, students of a Hispanic or Native American ethnicity had scores about 140 points lower in English sections than Caucasian students. Different cultural backgrounds inherently make the test unequal as well as the fact that the test was designed in America for natives of the U.

S. The questions and structure of the SAT itself are unfair minorities, however the test isn't inherently bias, America is. Now that I have given you bits of information and various things to think about which you have most likely already formed your own opinion about- let me pose a simple question. Why do students take this test? The obvious answer is that students take it to measure their intelligence comparable to other students', but this wasn't exactly what I was looking for, as we already know the SAT is not a reliable measurement of intelligence. Okay, okay, I know I can't get too cynical and claim that the SAT has absolutely no value, which I would be lying if I said so. But we've already determined that it's definitely not the best way to measure one's intelligence.

So, is it because students want to? Obviously not. Well, now, let's think. Why do people do anything? Because procreation has told us to. The world is changing and there are constantly new discoveries challenging the preconceived ideas that society falls victim to, however society still praises the foundations of a test created almost one hundred years ago. Meaningless, unchanging tradition passed down from generation to

generation that no one dares to break because it is important to abide by social standards.

America's social standard is that a piece of paper can define our education, our career, our future and essentially the entire fiber of our being. There are many reasons to be taking this test but it's becoming more difficult to sift through them as I can't seem to remember which ideas I truly believe or which ones were just shoved down my throat long enough so that I had to learn how to swallow it. We have been mentally rewired to have a predisposition that a test can place the value of our lives in the confinement of a number between 1-1600. We are not numbers. Every person has their own talents and their own weaknesses yet standardized tests washes all of that away, making all of us lesser and incomplete versions of ourselves.

It doesn't measure one's empathy, it doesn't reward the musically gifted, it doesn't acknowledge one's perseverance. The SAT does not measure any of the qualities that make up a human life yet society slaps a score on each person claiming that this number is the measure of worth. But how do you measure one's life through the confinements of A, B, C, or D? It is not only the tests that are at fault, but it is also the society that pushes the SAT into the spotlight- even though we know the consequences of this test. There are so many reasons that the test is unreliable, yet all of America is too complacent to realize it even though the facts are all there. There will never be change unless there is someone to care. This test is a product of the same social system that fails to realize the receding idea of equality that has led to bias through gender roles, social status, and race.

It's becoming more and more clear that the reason it's impossible to create a fair test is because society itself is inherently corrupt. The SAT is bias based on different races or wealth yet people are so blind to realize that it is our own fault for emphasizing a test that is a direct reflection of our corrupt society, as these same inequalities were not created by the SAT, rather they were created by us. We are no better than the test itself and because of this, the test did not fail, America did.