

Stereotypes, College, and Suicide

Compared to Caucasian students, African American students applying to college have an extra 230-point “boost” on the SAT, meaning they can score 230 points less and still have the same admission chance, as found by a Princeton University study. While Hispanic students have an extra 185-point boost, Asians are penalized by 50 points, according to www.latimes.com. Why is it that in a nation supposedly sheltered from segregation, this still impedes all Asian students aspiring to enter college? In America, people should recognize that humans of different ethnicities don't all reside in a stereotypical box.

The difference in expectations is so drastic that some of my Asian friends unwillingly mark “Asian or Pacific Islander” in their college applications. With the presumption that all Asians are smart, they believe colleges reject their hard-earned 4.0s and years of piano, dismissing each of them as what a typical “Asian nerd” has. Even to keep up with society so people don't view them as outcasts, they have to work hard to get good grades; they feel obligated and pressured. This creates a lot of stress on the teens, sometimes even to the level of suicide. A year ago, an Asian college student committed suicide at my school, invoking a slap from reality.

Despite trying not to, all humans still stereotype other races and expect them to all be a certain way based on limited interactions. For example, when many people see a Hispanic high in government, they do not expect it and are probably shocked. They assume all African Americans are athletic, all Hispanics have large families, and all Asians are smart and like math. Each ethnicity has people of a spectrum of abilities and personalities, as with religion, gender, etc.

Senator Harris can vote on policies forbidding colleges from stereotyping races and establishing disadvantages for certain ones. Sports don't give "boosts" to different races, and only judge based on skill. Only the best will be able to make the teams and be successful. If sports can do that, then colleges should be able to follow. Even though the NFL is 70% African American, few people say that they need athletes of other races. With colleges having no bias on race, everyone can be proud of their heritage. They don't have to live what a "typical" person of their nationality would do. I hope that one day, this will be achieved. Every year, this goal inches closer and closer to reality, but for it to advance faster, actions must be executed. When everyone is able to start equal, regardless of characteristics they are born with, they will be empowered to be the best they can, with none of the disadvantages and prejudice of race.