



Written by [Walter E. Williams](#) on August 30, 2017

## Racial Lies and Racism

Earlier this month, *The New York Times* ran an article titled “U.S. Rights Unit Shifts to Study Antiwhite Bias” on its front page. The article says that President Donald Trump’s Justice Department’s civil rights division is going to investigate and sue universities whose affirmative action admissions policies discriminate against white applicants. This is an out-and-out lie. The truth is that the U.S. departments of Justice and Education plan to investigate racial bias in admissions at Harvard and other elite institutions where Asian-Americans are held to far higher standards than other applicants. This type of practice was used during the first half of the 20th century to limit the number of Jews at Harvard and other Ivy League schools.



Drs. Thomas Espenshade and Alexandria Radford documented discrimination against Asians in their 2009 award-winning book, *No Longer Separate, Not Yet Equal: Race and Class in Elite College Admission and Campus Life*. Their research demonstrated that, when controlling for other variables, Asian students faced considerable odds against their admission. To be admitted to elite colleges, Asians needed SAT scores 140 points higher than whites, 270 points higher than Hispanics and 450 points higher than blacks. An Asian applicant with an SAT score of 1500 (out of a possible 1600 on the old SAT) had the same chance of being admitted as a white student with a 1360 score, a Latino with a 1230 and a black student with a 1050 score. Another way of looking at it is that among applicants who had the highest SAT scores (within the 1400-1600 range), 77 percent of blacks were admitted, 48 percent of Hispanics, 40 percent of whites and only 30 percent of Asians.

The case of Austin Jia is typical of what happens to Asian students. In 2015, Jia graduated from high school and had a nearly perfect score of 2340 out of 2400 possible points on the new SAT. His GPA was 4.42, and he had taken 11 Advanced Placement courses in high school. He had been on his school’s debate team, been the tennis team’s captain and played the violin in the all-state orchestra. His applications for admission were rejected at Harvard, Princeton and Columbia universities, as well as at



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the University of Pennsylvania. Jia said that his rejection was particularly disturbing when certain classmates who had lower scores but were not Asian-American like him were admitted to those Ivy League schools.

California universities present an interesting case. At one time, they also discriminated against Asians in admissions, but now it's a different story. As of 2008, Asians made up 40 percent of the students enrolled at UCLA and 43 percent at the University of California, Berkeley. Last school year, 42 percent of students at Caltech were Asian. You might ask what accounts for the high numbers. It turns out that in 1996, Proposition 209 (also known as the California Civil Rights Initiative) was approved by California voters. The measure amended the state constitution to prohibit state governmental institutions from considering race, sex or ethnicity in the areas of public employment, public contracting and public education.

The experience of California, where racially discriminatory admissions policy has been reduced, suggests that if Ivy League universities were prohibited from using race as a factor in admissions, the Asian-American admissions rate would rise while the percentages of white, black and Hispanic students would fall. Diversity-crazed college administrators would throw a hissy fit. By the way, diversity-crazed administrators are willing accomplices in the nearly total lack of racial diversity on their basketball teams. It's not unusual to watch games in which there's not a single white, Hispanic or Asian player.

Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz says, "The idea of discriminating against Asians in order to make room for other minorities doesn't seem right as a matter of principle." Dershowitz is absolutely right, but he goes astray when he argues that investigating discrimination against whites raises a different set of questions. He says, "Generically, whites have not been the subject of historic discrimination." Dershowitz's vision fails to see people as humans, because what human is deserving of racial discrimination?

*Walter E. Williams is a professor of economics at George Mason University. To find out more about Walter E. Williams and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate webpage at [www.creators.com](http://www.creators.com).*

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