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My parents always wanted me to go to an elite school, something like Harvard and Duke that ranked high on USNews and the like. If I ever asked why I couldn't just go to a mediocre-to-good state school—probably even save money doing so—they would tell me something along the lines of the words quoted in Wesley Yang's popular essay, [Paper Tigers](http://nymag.com/news/features/asian-americans-2011-5/):

>If you’re East Asian, you need to attend a top-tier university to land a good high-paying gig. Even if you land that good high-paying gig, the white guy with the **\*\****\_pedigree\_***\*\*** from a mediocre state university will somehow move ahead of you in the ranks simply because he’s white.

It was that *\_pedigree\_* that they told me about a lot. White people had family and friends here. White people knew people. White people had connections. Through their network, they could move up much easier than compared with people whose faces that looked like mine. So I, and along with many other Asian-Americans, convinced ourselves of this and resolved to "make it" in this Asian world, and by extension, white America. But the pursuit for academic success and approval is only a small part of the Asian-American experience. There's so much more.

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