

What will help you get into Harvard? Super-rich parents with a chequebook and pen

Notes & Cues:	Article: <p>Want a place at Harvard? Persuade your parents to give the university a nice gift. While it is no secret that offering financial gifts to certain Ivy League universities may compensate for a lack of natural gifts, the extent to which Harvard's admission process favours relatives of big donors is only now being laid bare.</p> <p>This is thanks to a lawsuit currently under way against Harvard that accuses the university of discriminating against Asian Americans. In seeking to determine how Asian Americans are treated by Harvard, the lawsuit has unearthed a number of internal university documents that give unprecedented insight into its (seemingly money-centric) admissions processes.</p> <p>While the lawsuit has brought attention to the way in which donations and admissions are intertwined at Harvard, this wasn't its primary motive. The case, brought by a controversial conservative, Edward Blum, is rather more complicated than that. While ostensibly about racial bias against Asian Americans, the lawsuit is widely seen as an attempt to dismantle affirmative action policies that give traditionally underrepresented groups such as African Americans and Latinos a better chance at attending elite universities such as Harvard.</p> <p>Conservatives love to decry affirmative action as "reverse racism" and condemn the idea of racial quotas. What this lawsuit, perhaps inadvertently, has made abundantly clear, however, is that the most widespread affirmative action programmes at play in elite institutions don't help minority racial groups—they help rich, predominantly white people. These programmes just aren't labelled "affirmative action". They are labelled the status quo.</p>
Summary:	