

'I got into Yale' isn't a moral defense**Notes & Cues:****Article:**

When Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh found his conduct in question on Thursday, he twice responded by referring to his Ivy League degrees.

At one point, Senator Sheldon Whitehouse pursued a line of questioning about the “Beach Week Ralph Club,” a phrase that appeared in Kavanaugh’s yearbook next to his senior photo. Whitehouse asked if the “Ralph Club” reference had to do specifically with alcohol, and Kavanaugh responded:

“Senator, I was at the top of my class academically, busted my butt in school. Captain of the varsity basketball team. Got in Yale College. When I got into Yale College, got into Yale Law School. Worked my tail off.”

It was a deflection, but the particular shield he raised was telling. His response seems to suggest a belief that a prestigious education stands as evidence of moral rightness.

Kavanaugh treated his education as a magic wand, something that could be waved to dispel questions of his conduct. Indeed, Americans have a particular fondness for meritocratic narratives, frequently conflating achievements and hard work with human worth.

It should go without saying, but there are all sorts of bad actors who have attended prestigious universities. It is a reminder that attending a prestigious school isn’t in and of itself revealing of anyone’s moral character in any direction.

Summary: