

OPINION

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College Admission Tests Biased and Unhelpful

SAT and ACT can't predict student success

BY JILL RICHARDSON

A lawsuit is taking on the University of California system's use of the SAT and ACT standardized tests in admissions. The suit claims the tests are "deeply biased and provide no meaningful information about a student's ability to succeed."

As a sociologist who's looked at the research, I agree the tests are biased.

For instance, studies show that students whose parents have more education and/or higher incomes do better on the tests. Test scores are also racially biased, with whites and Asians scoring better than blacks and Latinos in ways that are "unlikely" to be "explained away by class differences across race," according to Brookings researchers.



Why does wealth impact your SAT score? There are several reasons.

Public schools are funded by property taxes, so students from wealthier families in poorer neighborhoods can use their financial wealth to go to better-funded schools. They can afford to take test prep classes, and they can afford to take the test multiple times to improve their scores. Additionally, students from wealthy families are more likely to get access to disability accommodations (like extra time) on the exam if they qualify for them.

But there's a second part to the lawsuit's claim: These test scores don't even predict a student's ability to succeed in college.

This appears to be correct as well. What does predict college success? High school GPA. This makes sense: The skills students use to get good grades in high school are more or less the same ones they use to get good grades in college. The skills used to take a standardized test general-

ly aren't.

In America, we like to think we live in a meritocracy, where people get ahead through brains, grit, and hard work. We don't.

Instead, students from low-income families are already at a disadvantage in the school sys-

tem, for a long list of reasons. Even the most talented and hard-working child born into a poor family is going to struggle to compete with wealthier peers.

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in which a teacher showed up and taught.

At the time the reporter visited, the school had been failing for so long that it had lost its accreditation, and yet it was still teaching students — or failing to. How could even the best

apply to college.

That said, if standardized tests are biased against low-income students and students of color — and if they don't even predict success in college — then what are they even for?

Under these circumstances,

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In an episode of This American Life, a reporter followed an honor student around his high school in Ferguson, Missouri. In an entire day he had only three academic classes, and only one

students in that school compete with peers who had full days of classes with teachers teaching in their schools?

While the school system cannot single-handedly correct for all social ills and inequalities, it should do what it can to level the playing field for all students. And efforts to increase equity need to start long before students

the only function they can possibly serve is as a roadblock to social mobility for students who were not born into privilege — and as an extra unearned advantage for those who were.

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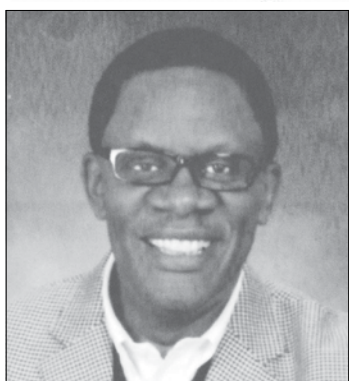
Part 23

Chiropractic And Knees:

Knees need to know how Chiropractic helps too.

Q: My right knee hurts terribly all of the time. It has been swollen several times to the point of needing to be drained. Can Chiropractic help?

A: Your case sounds familiar. It reminds me of one case in particular. A man once came to my office for consultation. He wanted to show me his knee but his slacks were so tight from swelling in his knee that he could not pull his pant leg up to show me. I talked to him about his knee and showed him graphs of the nervous system and how it affects the knee. He decided to become a Chiropractic patient and has had no problem with his knee since. Within days the swelling was out of his knee. Like so many patients, he had an added bonus. His back was stronger and healthier than it had been in years. His



Dr. Billy R. Flowers

headaches disappeared. In short, he got that healthy happy feeling of Chiropractic. If you have knee pain or if you have any question concerning your health at all, call us today, Isn't it time you stepped up to Chiropractic?

To find out how Chiropractic might be able to help you or for answers to any questions you might have about your health, please feel free to call us at the phone number shown below.

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 2027 Lloyd Center Mall,
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