# Article information:

The Secret Joke at the Heart of the Harvard Affirmative-Action Case | The New Yorker  
<https://www.newyorker.com/news/our-columnists/the-secret-joke-at-the-heart-of-the-harvard-affirmative-action-case>

# Article summary:

1. The Supreme Court requested the entire trial record, including sealed materials, for the Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard case, which may end race-conscious affirmative action in university admissions.

2. The trial revealed that Harvard gave Asian American applicants higher academic and extracurricular ratings but lower "personal ratings" than white applicants, but Judge Allison Burroughs rejected the argument that this was intentional discrimination.

3. The article discusses a "joke memo" sent by a Department of Education official to Harvard's dean of admissions that contained anti-Asian remarks and was kept sealed by Judge Burroughs despite requests for it to be unsealed.

# Article rating:

Appears moderately imbalanced: The article provides some useful information, but is missing several important points or pieces of evidence that would be required to present the discussed topics in a balanced and reliable way. You are encouraged to seek a more balanced perspective on the presented issues by exploring the provided research topics and looking at different information sources.

# Article analysis:

The New Yorker's article "The Secret Joke at the Heart of the Harvard Affirmative-Action Case" provides a detailed account of the trial in Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard, which aimed to determine whether Harvard intentionally discriminated against Asian American applicants. The article highlights the unusual steps taken by the Supreme Court to request sealed records from the district court and the subsequent fight to unseal certain sidebars from the trial.

However, the article's potential biases and one-sided reporting are evident in its focus on unsealing specific court records rather than providing a comprehensive analysis of the case. The author's personal interest in unsealing these records as a researcher and reporter is not fully disclosed, potentially leading to a biased perspective.

Additionally, while the article discusses Judge Burroughs' decision to keep certain portions of the sidebars sealed due to privacy concerns, it does not explore potential risks associated with releasing sensitive information about applicants or government officials involved in the case. The article also fails to provide counterarguments or evidence supporting Harvard's objections to unsealing certain records.

Furthermore, while the article briefly mentions Harvard's argument that concern about "the press gallery" was why some discussions were sealed in the first place, it does not explore this issue further or consider how media coverage may have influenced public perception of the case.

Overall, while "The Secret Joke at the Heart of the Harvard Affirmative-Action Case" provides an interesting account of efforts to unseal court records related to discrimination against Asian American applicants at Harvard, its potential biases and one-sided reporting limit its overall credibility and objectivity.

# Topics for further research:

* Harvard's objections to unsealing certain records in Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard
* Risks associated with releasing sensitive information about applicants or government officials in court records
* Counterarguments to the claim that Harvard intentionally discriminated against Asian American applicants
* Media coverage and its potential influence on public perception of the case
* Privacy concerns and Judge Burroughs' decision to keep certain portions of the sidebars sealed
* The broader implications of the case for affirmative action policies in higher education.

# Report location:

<https://www.fullpicture.app/item/6c49df5fc0cb64a14166c82857e59154>