

GREAT EXPECTATIONS: EGHS S

Racial stereotypes shape cliques, behavior

Paige Crenshaw
Staff Reporter

While stereotypes may not affect some students, long-standing ideas regarding different minority groups persist through the school.

Among them is the idea that intelligence is a “white trait.”

“I’m in higher level classes. I try and break the stereotype that people place Mexicans into,” sophomore Alex Diez said, who feels pressure to break his “mold.”

Part of that stereotype, Diez said, is the idea that he will not be able to achieve as much as his fellow peers.

“I see people who don’t do any work. I don’t

want to be like that,” Diez said.

His high ACT score, along with his stellar grades, usually quiet his fellow classmates

“I usually think that they think I’m stupid, but then they found out my ACT score,” Diez said.

This discovery has led to some of his friends to question their beliefs on race and intelligence.

A wide achievement gap that exists between Hispanic and white students at Elk Grove.

This gap has heightened over the past years as the Hispanic population has increased. It is a gap, Diez said, that he feels pressure to break.

“I don’t want to perpetuate a stereotype,”

he said

Some students at Elk Grove feel racial, ethnic, or cultural pressure at school, even though others may view it as a non-issue.

Freshman Shayla Pryor does her best to shrug off racial prejudice.

It is a prejudice, Pryor said, that extends beyond students.

“I feel like race shouldn’t matter, but in a way it does because I feel like some teachers mistreat other students depending on their race,” said Pryor, who is half white and half African-American.

Among these pressures is a belief that some adults may judge students based on their race, whether that be in the form of stereotyping or measuring

their achievements.

“Some staff members will assume something right of the bat, like a stereotype, that simply isn’t true,” said junior Arman Rahman.

Rahman, like many other students, feel that while the issue is not widespread among adults, stereotyping may occur every so often. The feelings that certain adults give off, Rahman said, “can get annoying.”

Other students, like sophomore Thomas Modrich, feel like racial tension at school exists among students as well.

Modrich suggests that students feel a certain pressure to associate with people within their racial group. Racial mixing in

the hallway, Modrich said, is a rare occurrence.

“I feel that there’s definitely some sense of, not actual segregation, but there’s definitely a feel of some people congregate with people of their own race or ethnicity,” said Modrich.

Even students who have friends of different races feel like they need to watch what they say as to not create problems.

“I think certain jokes are funny, but I wouldn’t laugh at them around certain people. I do not want to offend anyone,” junior Maeve Garvin said.

Usually, Garvin said, these jokes revolve around stereotypes.

“I wouldn’t say that there are any negative

ones [stereotypes] per se,” Modrich said.

“I have a few Asian friends, and they jokingly mention like that Asians are smart, and they are.”

However, social groups may not be all based on racial or ethnic preferences.

Junior Melissa Ivers feels that students may be involved in groups based on their beliefs rather than their race.

“I see a divide, but it’s doesn’t always revolve around race. It’s about cliques,” Ivers said.

“Popular people hang out with popular people, smart kids hang out with the smart kids,” Ivers said. “It’s always been like that and it probably always will.”

What racial stereotypes do students have?



Freshman Natalie Nava

“Hispanics are good at soccer.”



Sophomore Marc Christopher

“Ethnic groups act differently.”



Junior Shivani Patel

“Asians are smart.”



Senior Yasuhiro Omura

“Asians are smart.”

Photos and information compiled by Katie Weber, Paige Crenshaw and Yumi Miyazaki

We surveyed a variety of students in May regarding different types of pressures. Our findings are shown to the left.

One: Do you feel pressure to act a certain way while you are with a certain group of people?

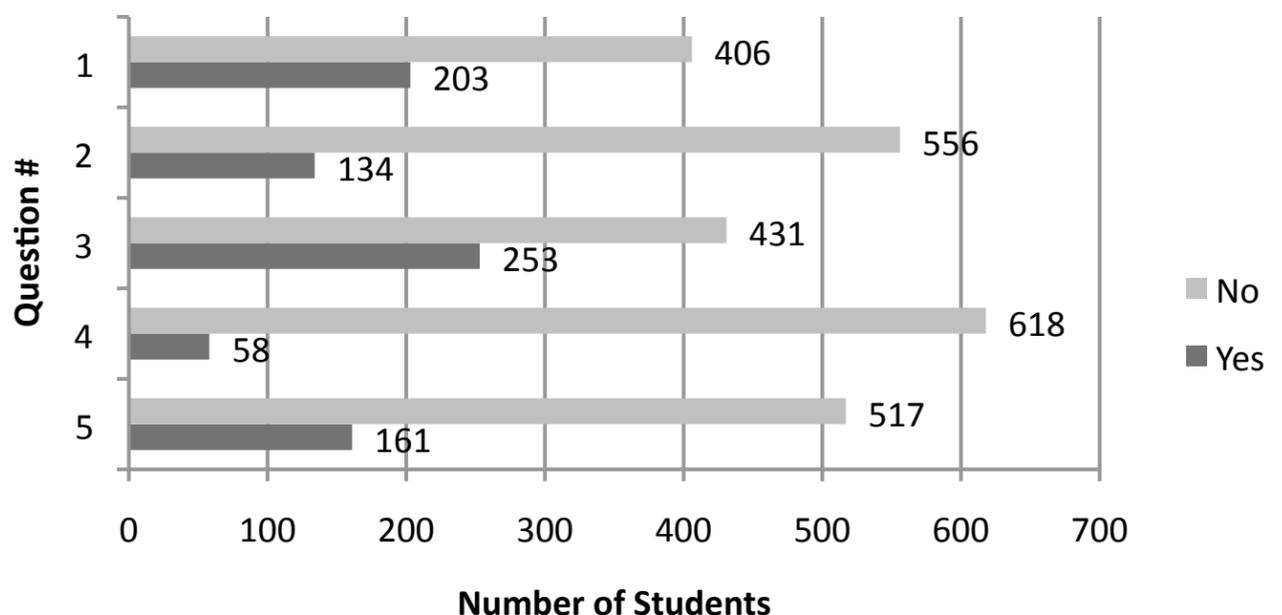
Two: Do you feel pressure to act a certain way while you are with a certain group of people?

Three: Do you feel pressure to act a certain way while you are with a certain group of people?

Four: Do you feel uncomfortable approaching an individual of a different race as you?

Five: Do you feel uncomfortable approaching an individual of a different race as you?

Survey Results



Information compiled by Katie Weber, Paige Crenshaw and Yumi Miyazaki

Students feel societal pressure

TRADITION vs. LOVE: Battling perspectives on dating

Katie Weber
Staff Reporter

People who have flipped on their TV to watch "The Bachelor," rolled their eyes at the latest romantic comedy or picked up a trashy magazine are all too aware of the presence of romantic relationships in popular culture. It is almost impossible to imagine a world that does not place such a strong emphasis on this aspect of life.

However, many high school students are taught to shy away from these relationships. Some believe that it is right to avoid romantic relationships for religious reasons; others ignore their society's opinion that dating is not right for them. The former feels that following this method relieves moral pressure; the later believes that turning one's back to societal pressures is the right choice.

"We've always been told that we're going to have an arranged marriage. It's always been perfectly fine with me because I've always been taught that someone else somewhere is going to be waiting for me, so I'm going to be waiting for them too," Sophomore Sarah Rendel said.

Rendel and fellow sophomore Kenji Omura practice Unificationism. This religion's teachings have been passed on to Rendel and Omura; as a result, they are opting for arranged marriages rather than dating.

Although Omura acknowledges that his peers tend

to misunderstand this principle, they have a better understanding when he shares a metaphor with them.

"We have this ideology where suppose you have this rose, right? And when you meet your fated couple, like your fated partner, you want to give them this beautiful rose right? But suppose you have your first kiss, your first girlfriend, and then the petals of the rose fall away as you give away your first experiences," Omura said. "So when you finally meet your partner, you don't want to give them this scraggly stem. Instead, you want to give them a beautiful rose. And that's why in our church that we don't do anything."

Their church's expectations have not put any additional pressures on Rendel or Omura. Rather, it has provided the two with a strong sense of morality, which relieves them of typically high school pressures.

"The sense of what's right and what's wrong is very well-defined if your religion also goes hand-in-hand with your beliefs," Omura said.

Rendel stresses that Unificationists have the choice to follow their traditional marriage process.

"Our church is not forcing us to not date. It's our own decision. If we decide to date, no one in our church says it's wrong," Rendel said. "They don't judge."

However, after adhering to these beliefs since they were children and seeing successful

partners in their church, the choice is easy for Rendel and Omura.

"We also have good role model as well, that have gone through the same things we have," Rendel said. "They show good results, so it also encourages us."

A female junior faces a similar dilemma to Rendel and Omura's, but she has chosen to handle it in a very different way.

According to Anjali Patel*, it is not her church or culture that says she cannot date, but rather "Indian society."

"Society-wise, people in Indian society tend to think that if you're dating someone you might be less modest, like less humble than if you weren't dating someone," Patel said. "So people kind of look down on you, somebody might look down on you if they find out that you have a boyfriend."

Patel has chosen to turn her back to these societal pressures; she has been dating her current boyfriend for well over a year.

She feels that she is not alone in going rejecting her society's pressures. On the contrary, she believes that resisting this pressure has become commonplace among high schoolers.

"I would say that more [Indian kids] go behind their parents' backs [to date], but they have to do it secretly," Patel said.

In order to maintain her forbidden relationship, Anonymous frequently tells her parents that she is going out with



Photo by Katie Weber

MOONIES in the 21st Century: Rendel dons the Unificationist symbol; this group was referred to as "Moonies" throughout the 1970s. This symbol has existed since 1954 and represents peace, love and family relationships. Following Unificationist doctrine, Rendel follows a strict code of abstinence.

friends to cover up her dates.

"You kind of feel a little dishonest toward them [your parents]; you feel kind of bad that you have to lie," Patel said. "Then again, you know you can't tell the truth, so you have no choice."

Anonymous is proud that she has not bowed to societal

pressures. She feels that overcoming these pressures have helped forge her sense of identity.

"I definitely feel independent. I feel like no one can tell me if I can date or not," Patel said. "I honestly think that there's nothing wrong with what I'm doing."

*Name has been changed.

GENERATION XX, no longer just XY

Yumi Miyazaki
Cartoonist

Pink is for girls and blue is for boys. A simple sentence that would not have caused controversy 50 years ago. In the 21st century, however, such sentences have become taboo.

Regardless of gender, everyone is told that they can do whatever they want to do and they can be whatever they want to be. This can easily be seen at EGHS as the Grenadettes are a major part of both academics and extracurricular activities

However societal pressure on girls has still proven to be very high.

There are countless stories heard every day in media about young teenage girls who have taken their lives because of the need to "fit in" among their peers.

"I feel like within society, girls have a harder time to follow the feminine norms," said senior Shena Baccay.

In October of last fall, the Amanda Todd story became viral. Todd reluctantly agreed and soon the picture became viral.

Bullied by students of her school, Amanda moved from school to school. In the end she regrettably committed suicide due to the constant anxiety from the teasing.

There are plenty of examples similar to Todd's. Many people blame incidences such as Todd's on the males that took advantages of the "weak" females.



GIRLS' GENERATION: Throughout history it has been mostly a male dominant society, which has caused women to feel more pressure.

Yet, interestingly enough, psychological studies show that there are no differences between the emotional well being of females and males.

According to the APA (the American Psychology Association), a study done by Psychologist Janet Shibley Hyde, PhD, of the University of Wisconsin in Madison, show that men and women are similar in almost every single step of psychological development.

In her multiple studies, Hyde observed that the results were in line with the gender similarities hypothesis: gender differences had either no or a very small effect on the psychological variables examined.

The study also showed that when placed in an environment where gender roles did not matter and participants remained anonymous, women were more aggressive and men were more passive.

Hyde concluded that it was because the stereotypical idea of how men and women were removed.

Bringing it back to the perspective of EGHS, it is fair to say that girls only feel pressure because of the stereotypes that their peers and themselves build. Freshman Shayla Pryor agrees completely.

"I feel like a lot of people [from] society, especially older ones, feel like guys can do things better than girls can. I'm all about equality, so I feel like I just have to step up to the plate more," Pryor said.

The female students have definitely learned to step up to the plate as girls are now commonly found in math and science classes which were once thought be male-focused.

Girls have also learned to encroach into new fashion statements, no longer bounded by the social norm of a dress or skirt.

"I believe that there isn't necessarily a pressure on girls. I think both genders feel pressure from society," said junior Kaitlyn Roth.

"It's just girls tend to focus on it more."