## Elites

If Rome's oligarchs could have travelled to the future, they might have learned a trick or two from the US Ivy League. It is hard to think of a better system of elite perpetuation than that practiced by America's top universities.

Of the 31mn Americans aged between 18 and 24, just 68,000 are Ivy League schools undergraduates — about a fifth of a per cent. Of these, a varying ratio are non-white beneficiaries of affirmative action. Many of those are from privileged black or His[anic backgrounds, as opposed to Chicago's South Side or the wastelands of Detroit. This is the basis on which the Ivy League lays claim to being a deliverer of social change.

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