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### Where are the White People?

On May 23, 2015, I landed in the Mumbai airport late at night. From our arrival until the end of our trip, I never once stopped noticing the amount of people that would stare at our group. I was warned of this behavior before I arrived to India, but I did not know that it would have been as blatant as it was appearing to be. It seemed to me to be attributed to how ethnically homogenous of a society that was in India.

While at The Elephanta Caves, my friend Kiera was approached by an Indian family to pose for a picture with them. I thought this was extremely humorous at first, but this type of event became common on this trip to the point that it was annoying and uncomfortable. I believe that this is mostly attributed to the lack of ethnic diversity in the country of India, and how uncommon it is for people to see someone that isn't Indian. I am used to living in the United States that has a tradition of immigration of various ethnicities, races, and religions. Personally, I have Japanese, Chinese, Mexican, and Irish ancestors. This specific combination of ethnicities may be uncommon in the US, but variance of cultures is not uncommon.

I am a darker looking Asian because of my various roots, and I noticed several things in India because of this. For one, a lot of Northern Indians, especially in Musoorie, looked like several of my relatives. I also noticed that less people were surprised by my presence in the streets of India. Many people spoke to me in Hindi, and sadly, I was ripped off a lot less than other people on this

dialogue. My auto rickshaw rides were typically much cheaper than my friends and the initial prices of market items were less.

The lack of ethnic diversity in India was hard to ignore. There were a few Chinese and Nepalese people that I saw, but not many. This also contributed to the types of food found within India. Besides typical fast food restaurants such as McDonalds, KFC, and Dominos, I did not notice any restaurants that served food other than Indian or Indo-Chinese. In the Boston or in my home state of Utah, I can find dozens of different cuisines all on the same street and choose the one that suits my preference for that meal. In India, I got tired of Indian cuisine almost immediately because of how often our group ate Indian food.

With ethnic diversity often comes division and discrimination within a country. In the United States racial discrimination and stereotypes are very prominent. In any area where there are multiple groups there will be conflict. Racism has been a problem in the United States throughout its entire history. Some races are paid more than others, there are areas where specific races live, and violent conflict is often common. In India, I never noticed any blatant racism because it is an ethnically homogenous society. I think the largest dividing factor in Indian society is religion. Buddhist, Jainism, Sikhism, and Hinduism are all common in India and it's often easy to spot who is which. Certain areas of India have a majority of one or another, but I don't think that there is too much conflict between the various religions. In the United States, there are a surprising amounts of events that have noticeable conflict between races.

Being in India, has opened my eyes to the world outside of the United States. There are many differences between the United States and India economically, socially, and ethnically. The poverty and living conditions in India are much worse than in the United States, yet India is a place of hope. There is a strong sense of nationalism within India, and I do believe that

conditions here will improve as the country develops into a global power. The culture of India is an extremely diverse one without having people be different colors of skin. There are several languages spoken, the climate and environment changes state to state, and the people of India are faithful to several religions. Although, in the United States we see diversity as represented by the color of people's skin, India has a unique type of cultural diversity. One that unites everyone, even though they are so different.