

It was fifty-nine years ago when Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Junior gave his “I have a dream” speech at the Lincoln Memorial. The speech declared his desire that one day this nation would judge people not by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. A dream that was once achieved in this nation. Unfortunately, in recent years, academia is removing us from this dream once more. There are astounding examples of racism, segregation, and privileges shown in universities across this nation that proves that we have lost sight of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr’s dream.

We have a history of racism. Over the past two-hundred and forty-six years that the United States has been a country, it has seen slavery, war, and racial struggle. Yet, we find a land in which people of any race, creed, or background are capable of building a community unlike anywhere else in the world. Academia, however, declares our divisive past. How some of our ancestors held appalling views that are being dredged up and placed on the shoulders of a new generation with drastically different beliefs, thus resulting in a palpable shift in the unity we held for a moment resulting in calls for reparations and dismantling of “whiteness.” Universities are building a narrative through critical race theory that white communities are still at fault for racial division and people of color are victims of an oppressive system, rather than focusing on the changes that have been made. This ideology has only led to racial tensions between the groups as both are becoming increasingly defensive and agitated. One from being blamed for the acts of their predecessors and the other, angered by perceived slights from those with no intentions of harm.

Segregation is still being practiced in the United States, but not as obvious to the masses. In the past, there were various signs declaring which race “belonged” in one section or another

and cruel remarks were given to anybody who defied these social conventions. However, in today's world, segregation is done to "protect" people of color. In 2017, Black students in Harvard raised money to host their own graduation. In 2022, the University of California-Santa Barbara asked white students to not attend a free screening of Black Panther. How would these actions have gone over if white people had raised money to have their own graduation? Their own separate screening? These actions and many others make a clear division between our nation as people belonging to both communities are becoming more willing to separate themselves in the name of false protection of people of color.

We hold an unreasonable perception of privilege. Academia tells us that people of color have a harder time climbing the ladder of success. In fact, universities in this nation are seeking to impress upon students that the color of their skin dictates their successes in life. The University of Texas sought out the application of critical race theory to imbed in students that the color of their skin determines social status rather than the work a person is willing to put in. Attempts to empower people of color in our education system via affirmative action is an example of one of the privileges given to people of color that other races do not receive. Similarly, a white student may have good social network connections. Every person on this planet has privileges over another person. It is how we perceive these privileges that lead to our personal convictions on success. Yet, as a nation fueled through academia, we have chosen to divide ourselves based on our perceptions of privileges assigned by race which only create more tension between the communities that should be united. Ready to celebrate the accomplishments of anyone, regardless of how they look

People like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, Frederick Douglass, and Sojourner Truth had a dream of what they wanted the United States to look like. But in recent years, our universities have failed to look upon the achievements and works of figures like those stated in exchange for alienating tactics that have once more brought racial tensions back to the streets of America.