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About the New York Times Article I was featured in

For those who have uplifted me and some of my comrades in the movement, thank you. It is an honor to be recognized at the national level for student organizing.

I DO, HOWEVER, HAVE SOME BEEF.

Strike #1 - Black women's representation. In this article, I attempted to make space for one of UC Berkeley's Black woman student organizers, and/or one of the Black Liberation Collective's woman organizers to be apart of the story. I was told no, and that "there are plenty of women in the story." There are only three women in the story, and four men. This is not representative of our movement, and the NYT would rather put a white male ally in the story than another Black woman.

Strike #2 - Types of frames. I can speak for my interview alone when i say that alot was removed. They were quick to mention that my father was a former drug user, but not his work in rehabilitation centers or his work in transition houses for formerly incarcerated men. They conveniently forgot to mention that my mother graduated from Tennessee State University (an HBCU) in 3 1/2 years and that's what led her to give my sister and I different narratives of what it meant to be Black. They depicted me as if my parents, in spite of our economic circumstances, had no capital or agency, which reinforces anti-Black narratives of pathological people.

Strike #3 - Respectability and sanitized narratives. I will tell you that the way they framed Black specific student organizing in this piece reinforces alot of what the media depicts as a movement with no real aims. This is specifically about the erasure of the Black Justice League at Princeton, who led the occupation of the president's office to address the lack of racial (and economic) diversity on campus and the campuses settler colonial past. The student they selected from the University of Kansas does not represent the organizations on campus that have been doing the critical organizing work, and their organization has been known to reinforce patriarchy and heterosexism in leadership positions, which our movement has not stood for. The demands process at UC Berkeley that I mentioned, and the work of the undergraduate students, is completely erased from my story, because I emphasized the role of Black women and a diversity of Black identities in working to create change.

IN CONCLUSION:

This is how the media attempts to domesticate and calcify narratives of Black organizers, Black people, and Black youth. This is how the national memory of Black leaders like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. gets washed with the moral hygiene of whiteness, and he is reduced to "I Have a Dream" instead of his plans for the redistribution of wealth. This is how Black women, Black queer folks, and Black people get pushed to the margins while everyone else benefits from their work.

This, people, is what racism looks like in the 21st century.