“Slave.” The class turns to look at me. “Africa.” The class turns to look at me. “Martin Luther King.” The class turns my way. Unfortunately, this experience in school happened far too many times. And even more unfortunate is the reality that my experience in school is not unique.

From an early age, I knew there were other black people and BIPOC that should be included in my educational experience. Something told me the history was incomplete. I knew there were other stories and other histories that needed to be explored. Yet this was not my education. And as I would learn, this was not included in nearly all schools across the United States.

American children are enrolled in history courses throughout their K-12 education. However, a very prejudicial story is told in widely accepted history books. It is a white-washed story, regularly omitting important narratives of people of color and their important contributions in today’s society.

As a result, there is no shortage of stories or retelling of histories that include white male leaders who “discovered” America or who laid the foundation of colonization for Europeans. Non-white populations are regularly characterized as people who “savagely” fought Europeans; they were and continue to be unacknowledged as individuals with feelings, homes, humanity, or lives apart from White men.

This presentation has two main components. First, this presentation is designed to highlight the miseducation of American students on early American history. Unlike the most commonly used sources in US schools, this presentation is crafted from the perspective of a student, having just graduated High School and having been exposed to the ignorance of a nation while living a life in the middle of a strange racial dynamic of white and black family members.

Second, This presentation will reveal the real outcomes and white-washed realities of the American school system. The impact of this mis-education contributes to many of the reasons BIPOC are still treated so poorly. By working to reveal the truth behind the miseducation of America and giving a new perspective, hopefully more people will find themselves questioning their ignorance and this will push them to actively work towards becoming anti-racist, bringing the nation closer to acknowledging the deeply rooted problems of this society.

I will be using various sources from the Ithaca College Library Database, such as “Sanitizing history: National identification, negative stereotypes, and support for eliminating Columbus Day and adopting Indigenous Peoples Day,” by Eason, et. al., “Elite Revisionists and Popular Beliefs: Christopher Columbus, Hero or Villain?,” by Schuman, et al., “Harriet Tubman: The Life and the Life Stories,” by Jean Humez, and many more journals and books that reveal realities of situations in American history.

We need to continue to educate ourselves and actively be anti-racist. Humans are influenced when they are young, so we must start there in our reeducation and begin to tear apart the facade
painted over the tumultuous past of America. The proposal will take the form of a research document. It will be informative, comprehensive, and thought provoking. I will make it clear that these civil rights focused materials are to push for a better, non-biased education system.