

The growing college gap



At first glance, Tamara Draut's article seems to state a fact that most individuals already know: it's hard to get into college. Looking further into her claim, Draut reveals the struggles that low-income high school students applying to a four-year college or university face. Specifically, the article talks about enrollment gaps between class and race due to financial issues and the increase of high school students applying to colleges and universities across the nation. In addition, Draut begins her article by explaining the different outcomes that occur from specific levels of education.

First, she shows the lifetime economic gains that different degree, ranging from high school to PhD, will make. Second, she explains the different "qualities of life" that each education level will face. Specifically, Draut explains that those who cannot get into a higher education program will not have the opportunity to have a higher paying job. I especially agree with one aspect of Draut's argument in which she states that not enough college worthy students are getting to attend the schools that they want to and should be attending.

I agree with another part of Draut's argument should make all college degree seeking Americans fight against the injustice of government aid programs; providing aid on merit based performance only. This is not to say that I disagree with money being granted to students who study hard and make sacrifices in order to obtain their secondary education, I disagree with more money given to merit based programs instead of students who come from low income backgrounds.

Aid programs do not take into consideration that many low income students come from inner cities, where secondary education is at the bottom of

hierarchical education scale and these students lack the crucial knowledge that being taught at the more prestige's high schools of the suburbs where middle and upper class students attend. The later portion of Draut's article talks about the issues that stem from the nation's lack of financial aid. Since the loan/grant system has deteriorated, the social gap between Caucasian and "ethnic" students has increased.

Over 570, 000 students could not go to a public university solely because of financial reasons. This has caused the enrollment in community colleges to increase rapidly- 44% of all undergraduates go to a community college. Also, 40% of young adults surveyed said that they either had to delay their education or go to a less expensive school because of financial issues/student loans. Draut provided an example in her article by putting an image stating " I sure hope social security is around when I'm 65.

I'll need to finish paying off my college loans"(Draut, 383) The struggle to get into and maintain an education at a four-year college or university causes a social-rift among socioeconomic classes instead of solely on race/ethnicity. If low- income students are able to make it through a four-year program at one of the nation's most prestigious schools, they are more likely, according to statistical data, to have a higher wage premium in comparison to high-income students that graduate from the same academic institution.