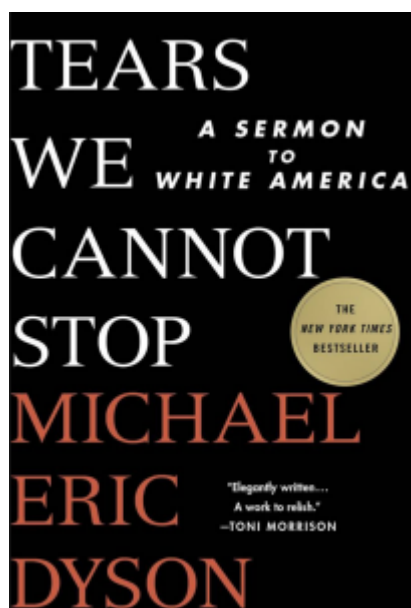


Book review: A lesson for all white people

By Kathryn Reed

I believe there is white privilege. I'm sure I've benefited in ways I don't even know. That ignorance is part of the problem of white privilege.

So much of the United States is divided by color. It's one of the original us vs. them battles, a battle that still exists today. The Civil War, the Civil Rights Movement, a black president – we are still full of uncivility.



In many ways it seems to be getting worse.

“Tears We Cannot Stop: A Sermon to White America” by Michael Eric Dyson (St. Martin’s Press, 2017) peels back the niceties of the issue to get to the raw truth. And that can be uncomfortable.

That’s why this book should be read – to see the truth from a black person’s point-of-view, to have to confront your own biases/prejudices, to learn, to think.

Most people just want their opinion, their feelings to be

heard. But too many of us don't want to listen. We think we know. But how can we know if we don't actually engage with people who are not like us?

This book is a type of engagement, albeit one sided. But maybe that's what is needed – an uninterrupted lesson from someone who doesn't resemble the reflection in the mirror.

Lake Tahoe is a pretty homogeneous place where the number of black people is a blip on a demographic chart. All the more reason to read the book to learn.

Dyson delves into the conflicts with law enforcement. But this book is so much more. It's a history lesson of sorts. White privilege is not a new concept.

“But the truth is that what so often passes for American history is really a record of white priorities or conquests set down as white achievement,” Dyson writes. “You certainly have an insatiable thirst for history, but only if that history justifies whiteness.”

The negative about the book is that it was written as a sermon. And to me, a sermon is like a lecture. And, really, who likes to be lectured to? Still, the message was powerful, enlightening and thought-provoking.