

# Martin luther king essay sample

[Sociology](#), [Slavery](#)



To what extent did the aims and methods of Martin Luther King differ from those of Black Power Activists? There is no question that the aims and methods of Martin Luther King differed from those of Black Power activists. King was peaceful and wanted integration with whites while Black Power activists confronted violence and believed in black supremacism and separatism. But they were also similar in some ways, such as speaking out on the Vietnam War. The aims of MLK differed significantly from those of Black Power activists.

The aims and methods of MLK did differ from those of Black Power activists. For example, King's campaigns such as the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955 and Birmingham 1963 were very peaceful, despite facing violence. King's peaceful message was due to him being a devout Christian and believing in love for all mankind. As a result, they were successful because they drew on the support from white people. In contrast, was Black Power Activists who some like Malcolm X, believed that blacks should defend themselves because it made them look weak and allowed whites to take advantage.

Malcolm X wasn't a Christian and so he didn't believe in King's Christian philosophy. This is a clear difference in both methods and ideology. King also wanted integration with whites, which can be contributed to his 'love your fellow man' philosophy. This was clear in King's March on Washington 1963, where both whites and blacks marched on Washington to hear speeches from civil rights leaders. King didn't just want integration with whites, as shown in his Poor Peoples Campaign 1968. In this, King called for a coalition of blacks, Native Americans, Hispanics and poor whites. This is a clear sign that King not only wanted to help blacks but others in American society. In

contrast was Malcolm X again, who believed that integration would bring about a new form of slavery between whites and blacks, with whites being richer and blacks being poorer. He wanted blacks to manage their own economy and even suggested having their own country. It wasn't just X who didn't want integration, as SNCC and CORE banned white members in the late 1960s.

Black Panthers didn't want it either and were far more radical than King, as the Panthers walked around with guns and were even labelled a 'terrorist' organisation by the FBI. The clear difference here is that King wanted integration with whites while Black Power activists only wanted to help blacks. The targets of King's campaigns were also different from those of Black Power activists. King focused on the south and tried to get legal change and sympathy from whites. Examples of this include Freedom Rides 1961 and Birmingham 1963. In contrast were Black Power activists, who concentrated on achieving economic and social inequality in the north. Examples of this include the Black Panthers survival programmes such as free liberation schools. This is a clear difference as King focused on the south while Black Power activists focused on the north. These are pieces of evidence which show how the aims and methods of Martin Luther King differed from those of Black Power activists.

Although seemingly different, there are examples that show common ground between the two. Although King focused on the south at the beginning, he did move to the north to try and tackle social and economic inequality. Examples of this include Chicago 1966 and Memphis Sanitation Workers

Strike 1968. Although failures, they are examples of how King and Black Power activists targeted areas for the same reasons. King also changed his philosophy right at the end of his life in the Poor Peoples Campaign 1968, where he asked for nationwide civil disobedience. This was a sign that King would have changed from peaceful protests had he lived longer and we know that Black Power wasn't peaceful throughout. It wasn't just King who changed later on but so did Malcolm X. After his hajj, X saw that whites and blacks could work together and began to change his philosophy before he was assassinated. This is evidence that there were signs of similarity before the two's death. Although Black Panthers were radical, some of their campaigns were peaceful.

This includes Patrol the Pigs, which was very popular and legal too. Their survival programmes including free health clinics, free liberation schools and free breakfast for school children were all peaceful and successful too. This is a sign of similarity as some Black Power campaigns were peaceful. Lastly, both sides spoke out on Vietnam, with King criticising President Johnson for it and Black Power activists calling it 'a race war'. Both sides' chances of successfully working with the government decreased too. This is evidence of both sides being similar, although saying different things. These are all pieces of evidence to show that the aims and methods of MLK and those of Black Power activists were similar in some ways.

In conclusion; the aims of MLK and those of Black Power activists were different. King preached campaigns to be peaceful while Black Power activists confronted violence. King wanted integration while BP activists such

as Malcolm X wanted black supremacism, separatism and nationalism. King also focused on the south early on while Black Power activists focused on the north throughout. But, there were signs of the two becoming more similar at the end. Both slightly changed their philosophies, with King proclaiming civil disobedience while X realised that whites and blacks could work together while on his hajj.

However, both were killed before we could see this come to fruition. It wasn't just the Nation of Islam, with Black Panthers showing that they were peaceful too in their survival programmes and Patrol the Pigs. Lastly, both spoke out on Vietnam, showing that they did have common beliefs even if it was surrounded in a package of different methods. Overall, the aims and methods of MLK differed significantly from those of Black Power activists.