

Malcolm x and martin luther king comparison essay

[History](#), [American History](#)



In the entire history of the United States, Malcolm X and Martin Luther King were the greatest advocates of freedom and civil rights. The two human rights activists contributed in liberating the blacks from the house of bondage by organizing strikes, demonstrations, and forums to challenge the white power. In the provided texts, the main theme is justice. However, the activists differ on the way justice and freedom ought to be achieved.

However, the two agreed that America was one country and the rights and freedoms of each person had to respect if society was avoid conflicts. The family backgrounds influenced the two activists in their writings. King grew up in a well to do family and acquired some modern education, which influenced his scholarly thinking.

On the other hand, Malcolm X grew up in slums whereby life was nasty, brutal, and short-lived. He never acquired any form of modern education, which affected his reasoning. Since he was a Christian and a scholar, King never advocated for violence but instead urged the blacks to exercise self-control and demonstrate peacefully.

He was ready to defend the actions of his group because he believed that negotiation was the best technique of conflict resolution. However, he explained that he resorted to direct action because the white race was unwilling to indulge in peaceful negotiations. He believed that direct action would force one of the parties to accept and appreciate negotiations. This would mean that he always advocated for peaceful resolution of conflicts in society, unlike Malcolm X who was malevolent.

On the other hand, Malcolm X was a Muslim who believed in the Jihad principles. He believed that the whites were not to be allowed to misbehave with the lives of the blacks. In this regard, blacks had to fight back whenever attacked by the whites. Malcolm X, unlike King, believed that justice had to be achieved through all possible means. In other words, he believed in the teachings of Nicolo Machiavelli, who posited that the end justified the means.

This meant that justify or greatness had to be achieved using any available techniques, including killing, treachery, negotiation and violence. In fact, the mode of attaining justice was the main difference between the two activists. On the contrary, King was inspired by the teachings of Socrates who died in order to show society that justice was never achieved through democracy. In this regard, democracy is portrayed as one of the worst forms of leadership.

King was optimistic that one day, America would be viewed as a united nation that does not discriminate any group. Conversely, Malcolm X was pessimistic and advised his followers to disregard whites and try as much as possible to associate with blacks only. To Malcolm X, King's dream was a nightmare that should never happen to the black race. He advised his group to consider the positions of blacks in the US before thinking of anything else. It can as well be interpreted to mean that Malcolm X was after the black supremacy while King was after equality.

While Malcolm X thought that the government could initiate justice, King thought that it was upon societal institutions such as the church, family, and media to bring about change. Malcolm X accused the government for

sleeping on the job, especially the black leaders who had the responsibility to ensure that blacks were treated fairly. In fact, he blamed the leaders for giving the blacks false hopes that things could change.

To Malcolm X, there was no difference between a leader from the south and the one from the north. Malcolm X believed that all leaders had an aim of oppressing and infringing on the rights of blacks. He wondered why the congress had many democrats yet it did not pass laws forbidding segregation. In the same tone, the senate had 67 democratic senators yet no law was initiated to bring about equality.

On his part, King argued that society had to interpret the law equally since those breaking it were not sinners as long as they did so for the benefit of the majority. He cited an example of the Supreme Court ruling that illegalized segregation in schools in the US. The white race had defied this order since segregation was still practiced in American schools. Similarly, King questioned the credibility of the American laws since they oppressed one race.

He therefore blamed the society for passing deformed laws but never blamed the government for not bringing justice. Therefore, to King, there were two types of laws that is, just and unjust. The white race had broken the just laws while the black race, including him, had broken the unjust laws.

He defined just laws as those that go hand in hand with the moral codes or the laws of God. The unjust law is the one that contravenes the moral codes. Justice, which entails human rights and freedoms, is a moral law that was

granted to each person by God. He utilized the works of St. Thomas Aquinas to drive his point home.