

# American authors and their identity (martin luther king jr sojourner truth and th...

[Sociology](#), [Identity](#)



All Americans partake in the American identity, one that represents freedom, equality and all its benefits. Sojourner Truth, Thomas Jefferson, and Martin Luther King Junior all indulged in the American identity to which they held to the highest regard, standing for what they believed was morally right.

Although they shared this common identity, their various ways of implementing it were quite dissimilar.

In 1776, the second year of the revolutionary war, (1775-1783) Thomas Jefferson, a Virginia congressman, who dared to speak out against the rule of the tyrant, King George III, wrote "The Declaration of Independence" which would come to be one of the greatest pieces of American Literature. In this epistle to the royal crown, he used stylistic devices such as organization and unique diction; He also uses rhetorical devices such as anaphora to convey his American identity.

An identity that resented injustice, and stood for fair treatment of the people by the government. In 1851 Sojourner Truth, who was born a slave in 1797, gave her short yet powerful speech, "Ain't I a Woman". This speech was administered at a Women's Convention in Akron, Ohio. The theme of the meeting being women empowerment, her speech complimented the occasion considerably well and passed on her message of equality amongst all with no hindrance through her use of slang and idiomatic expression.

On April 16th, 1963, a civil rights activist from Atlanta Georgia, named Martin Luther King Junior, after being imprisoned, wrote a letter to the clergymen of Alabama, criticizing them for condemning his peaceful attempts towards racial equality and justice for the African American community and other

minority races. His letter, titled " Letter from Birmingham Jail" showed examples of syntax, periodic and inverted sentences as well as parallelism. With Great Britain fighting wars on every side of the world, it was imperative that these expenses be funded.

The solution was to outrageously tax the colonists in order to solicit funds to settle the war debt. During the Revolutionary period, Jefferson, the spokesperson of the colonists, took to writing to express the anger of the colonists against what would come to be known as the intolerable acts. He uses strict organization to arrange his work by order of importance. The letter first begins with Jefferson stating out the unalienable rights given to one such as life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. " (Jefferson) He then goes on to list the wrongs the royal crown has committed against the colonists, known as the list of grievances. " He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them. " (Jefferson) Jefferson uses a rhetorical device known as anaphora in the repetition of the word " he has" as he continues to list the wrongs of the British Empire with each blow more powerful than the last. He concludes the letter by proposing a resolution, one that involves total emancipation from

Great Britain. That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved;" (Jefferson) This portion of the Declaration of Independence directly correlates with his American Identity and dream, to see a fully emancipated America on her own, a dream in which there is freedom for all abound. He During the Realism era, Sojourner Truth, a former slave, was asked to speak at a women's convention in Akron, Ohio.

Truth spoke with a stern voice, never shy not even for a minute, she capitalizes on the use of informal language and slang, with which she uses to convey her message. She uses words like "fix" "racket" and "twixt". She also develops a very informal relationship with her audience, making them feel loved, thus gaining their trust. "Well, children, where there is so much racket there must be something out of kilter. I think that 'twixt the Negroes of the south..... (Truth) She lets her true American identity be known, one that represents equality among all and a world in which women are being treated fairly and justly. Her use of figurative language through the repetition of the phrase "Ain't I a woman", fully illustrates the ideal that everyone is equal under her American identity. It began on April 3, 1963, with a series of marches and sit-ins against racism and racial segregation. Martin Luther King Junior, along with his colleagues, were arrested and thrown in jail on accounts of disobedience.

He faced harsh conditions at the Birmingham city jail but channeled it to writing a great piece that criticizes the Alabama council men for condemning his peaceful protest. Throughout his letter, he uses different types of sentences. Simple sentences, " Seldom do I pause to answer criticism of my work or ideas. " (King) compound sentences, " In those days the Church was not merely a thermometer that recorded the ideas and principles on popular opinion; it was a thermostat that transformed the mores of society. The sentence variances although, seemingly useless, is used to illustrate the importance in the statement being said. To illustrate this, the letter written due to its multiple sentences, ranging with different types to reveal his American identity of an America free of segregation. These three authors used different mediums with which to correct what was wrong with America at the time, and to set the ground for a much more better America. The America that we came to see today. Thus revealing their true identity.