

Famous thinkers



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Famous Thinkers Sandra Faye PHL/458/ Creative Minds and Critical Thinking
April 22, 2010 Famous Thinkers By this time, 2013, the world has been blessed with a good handful of creative thinkers who have greatly contributed to their communities, thus, to the world. Nelson Mandela and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr are to excellent examples of outside the box thinkers who strove relentlessly to make a difference in the way society was thinking, and acting The purpose of this paper is to give information about these two thinkers' contribution to society.

To examine their personal, social, and political environments, and to illustrate how these factors contributed to their individual creativity. To analyze the different problems or issues they sought to solve, and how they used their creative ideas to implement a solution to the problem. Throughout this body of work, I hope to achieve a detailed explanation of their personal journeys to greatness, and how their creative thinking helped pave the way society acts today. According to Ruggiero (2009) “ For the creative, thinking is an adventure.

Because they are relatively free of preconceived notions and prejudiced views, creative people are less inclined to accept prevailing views, less narrow in their perspectives, and less likely to conform with the thinking of those around them. They are bold in their conceptions, willing to entertain unpopular ideas and seemingly unlikely possibilities. They are willing to face unpleasant experiences, apply their curiosity, and learn from those experiences. ” Nelson Mandela was born in Mvezo, South Africa in July 18, 1918.

He was named Rolihlahla at birth by his father who was the principal counselor to the acting king of the Thembu people, Jongintaba. After his father's death, he became the ward of the Jongintaba. He was raised in a relatively traditional African tribal culture, and was told by the elders the stories of his ancestors during the war of resistance. " He dreamed also of making his own contribution to the freedom struggle of his people" (" Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory" 2013). After graduation from secondary school, he attended the University College of Fort Hare for his Bachelor' of Arts.

However he was expelled from the university for joining a student protest. He went to the University of South Africa where he completed his BA. He started studying for an LLB, which is the equivalent of a bachelor degree in law, but never completed school. At the beginning of the 1960's, apartheid became stricter, and the struggle against it became more intense. Mandela's belief in protesting without violence started to diminish, and he participated in organizing an arm struggle. After this period, he was on the run from the police for a long period of time.

He was arrested in 1962 and sentenced to five years in prison. He received a life sentence while incarcerated for treason in 1964 at the famous Rivonia Trials. This series of events helped him begin the creative process of stopping Racism in South Africa. While in prison he obtained an LLB through the University of South Africa. Likewise, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. had a series of life events alter his way of thinking. But it was more or Dr. King's upbringing that did so. Dr. King was born on January 15, 1929 into segregation.

He graduated from public school at about 15 year's old and attended Morehouse College where he earned his diploma in Sociology. Dr. King continued in footsteps of his father and grandfather and became a pastor where he began to instill his beliefs to the African American community. People looked up to him and listened to his voice so he used his words in order to get people to follow his movement. Respectively, both Mandela and Dr. King effectively paved the way to the beginning of desegregation in their countries. From a personal standpoint, neither was particularly happy with the way men and women of color were treated.

Unlike most people however, they decided to do something about it. "Because they are relatively free of preconceived notions and prejudiced views, creative people are less inclined to accept prevailing views, less narrow in their perspectives, and less likely to conform with the thinking of those around them. They are bold in their conceptions, willing to entertain unpopular ideas and seemingly unlikely possibilities" (Ruggiero, 2009, Chapter 5). Mandela joined the African National Congress in 1944 and formed the youth league.

He rose through the ranks of both organizations, which fought for equal conditions for the different peoples of South Africa. He spent 27 years in prison and became a somewhat of an icon against the oppression of the white dominated demographic. While in prison for nearly three decades, he became the face of the apartheid movement both within South Africa and internationally. The day he was released from prison he said according to The " Nelson Mandela Centre Of Memory " (2013) website Today the majority of South Africans, black and white, recognize that apartheid has no future.

It has to be ended by our own decisive mass action in order to build peace and security. The mass campaign of defiance and other actions of our organization [referring to the African National Congress] and people can only culminate in the establishment of democracy. I have fought against white domination and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. He became the leader of the ANC once again and participated in the eradication of apartheid.

He used the popularity he gained by standing for his strong beliefs to become the first black president of South Africa. His self-control and wisdom were very much the contributing factors that have facilitated the revolution of South Africa in a more civil manner. Dr. King used a more direct approach. While Nelson was political, Dr. King used a social advantage to push his creative ideas. Dr. King is noted for having organized bus boycotts; sit in and marches, peacefully. He was able to do this because of his words.

Knowing this, he authored one of the most famous speeches ever in the history of the United States that is most commonly named the “ I have a dream” speech. In which “ he condemned the realities of segregation and racism, and simultaneously expressed his determination to overcome them. His powerful voice still echoes, transcending time and distance (King, 2003). His ability to convince people to ride with him made his creativity relevant. Mohandas “ Mahatma” Gandhi, the spiritual leader of India’s, inspired his philosophy of non-violence.

Gandhi through non-violence protest had forced the British out of India. Dr. King studied some of his strategies and tailored in the American Civil Rights

Movement. He also adopted this philosophy from the Bible and his faith in God to inspire people to stand up and fight against injustice that were done against the people of color in the United States. Although Mandela and King lived in two different parts of the world, both faced the same challenge, equality for all members of society. Such a change in society requires a new way of thinking.

The solution may seem simple, but it requires gradual changes. Therefore, it is not unusual for both men to face adversity, punishment, or cruelty. Mandela spent more than a quarter of a century in jail. Martin Luther King was assassinated. The result in both cases is the eventual outlaw of segregation that created the conditions for men of color to become president of the United States, as well as president of the Republic of South Africa. Nevertheless, racial prejudices still exist in both countries. It takes a long time to change the deep culture in any society.

Conclusion Personally I feel like a lot could have been done differently in terms of the way things were handled in the case of Mandela. I feel that 27 years in prison was too much of a punishment. It is speculated that Mandela could have negotiated his release earlier, but he chose not to in order to prove a point, which in turn earned him respect amongst his peers, and eventually led to his presidency. He retired from politics in 1999, but remained a supporter for peace and human justice and an ardent advocate for a variety of social and human right organizations.

In the case of King, I believe that he handled his challenge with great efficiency. His organization was flawless, and his message reached the world. Both men faced the same challenge but different environments. Both paid a

price for wanting to be equal. Both contributed to the world and their ideas are still alive today. References Ruggiero, Vincent R. (2009). *The Art of Thinking: A Guide to Critical and Creative Thought* (9th ed.). Retrieved from The University of Phoenix eBook Collection database King, M. L. (1992, January).

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