

# Civil rights and equality

[Politics](#), [Civil Rights](#)



African American Civil right and Equality Tara Faircloth HIS 204 Mr. Galano  
October 28, 2011 The topic I have chosen to write about is how African Americans worked to end segregation, discrimination, and isolation to obtain equality and civil rights. Ever since the African Americans were slaves they have had to come a long way to get where they are today. Some have even held positions in political offices, managed corporations, and gained all the rights that everyone else has. But, it's never always been that way.

African Americans were treated unjustly and had to go through things that most people cannot understand and have never had to endure. Over the generations African Americans have had to deal with many different struggles. Some of these struggles were unnecessary. Such as, them having to be a witness to their parents death, men would be witness to the rape of their mothers or wives, children being murdered or beaten. Back in those days the African Americans had no voice or rights.

When they first came to the United States, African Americans were sold into slavery, which meant them or family members were auctioned to the slave owners. On top of this and other struggles, African Americans had to bare unmentionable punishments. They were sprayed with high power water hoses, beaten with sticks and wifes, arrested for no apparent reason, and even murdered. Between the 1950's and 1970's many people took part in actions to end the segregation, discrimination, and isolation among the African Americans. Some of these people included, Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King Jr. who took part in nonviolent actions, which involved sit-ins, boycotts, marches and other peaceful types of protests. For example, On December 1, 1955 Rosa Parks who was also known as the " Mother of the

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Civil Rights Movement” who refused to give up her seat to a white passenger. Because she was disobedient by law she was arrested, tried, and convicted for misconduct. After Rosa Parks made her stand, word spread within the African American communities. Fifty African American leaders put together the Montgomery Bus Boycott, which demanded more humane transportation system.

The boycott lasted 381 days before the local ordinance segregating African Americans and whites on public buses was abolished. In 1965, a federal court forced the buses to become desegregated. Martin Luther King Jr. was an American activist, clergyman, as well as a leader in the African American Civil Rights Movement. He is to this day still known as an iconic figure for the advancement of civil rights within the United States and in other parts of the world, as well as for using nonviolent methods that he learned from Gandhi’s teachings. Martin Luther King Jr. s made to be a heroic leader in the history of modern American liberalism. When King started the civil rights movement he was a pastor at a Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama, for just over a year when the civil rights advocate contested racial segregation on city buses. The activists followed King and formed the Montgomery Improvement Association which boycotted the transit system. Finally, since the African Americans were ready to do something to support their rights they followed Kings Advice to “ work with grim and firm determination to gain justice on the buses in the city”.

He was respected and it was thought that his family connections and professional standing would enable him to find other pastorates, if the

boycott was to fail. On April 4, 1968, Martin Luther King Jr. was shot standing outside on the balcony of his second story hotel room. The bullet went through his cheek smashing his jaw, and then went through his spinal cord just before it lodged inside his shoulder. Martin Luther King Jr. was pronounced dead later that night. African Americans began participating in boycotts, marches, and sit-ins to get legislation passed to overcome their degrading issues.

Some cases of these are, they boycotted when Rosa Parks was arrested, during sit-ins they would sit where the white people section was. By doing any of these actions it created more issues for them such as being beaten by white men and women including the police. Although, the African Americans were just trying to stand up for what they believed in the white people did not agree. The white people had very different views on what they believed were supposed to be the way of things.

While the civil rights movement took on two different paths which were the non-violent actions by Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King Jr. there were also violent acts that were the strategies of Malcolm X who went by a strict principle of violence to get even with the whites that committed crimes against the African Americans. Malcolm X was born May 19, 1925 in Omaha, Nebraska. He was the son of a Baptist minister, who was an admirer of Marcus Garvey. Garvey was the African American Nationalist leader back in the 1920's he advocated the "back-to-Africa" movement.

Malcolm's family had to move around a lot because they were harassed by the Ku Klux Klan. For example, their home in Michigan was set on fire by the

Ku Klux Klan which resulted in his father's death. At the age of fifteen Malcolm began a criminal life of gambling, selling drugs, burglary, and hustling. In 1946, Malcolm was given ten years in prison for burglary at this time is when he began to transform his life. He transformed his life by studying the teachings of Muhammad and practicing this religion faithfully.

After he expanded his vocabulary he began to understand the racial teachings of his new found religion; which believed the white man was evil, and they were doomed by Allah and that the best things for the black man to do was to separate himself from Western, white civilization-culturally, politically, physically, and psychologically. In conclusion, the African Americans had to endure a lot of pain and humiliation before they could have their own rights. If it wasn't for everyone that took part in the civil rights movement African Americans probably never would have received recognition and being treated the same as the white man.