

# Martin luther king essay sample

Law



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According to the Dictionary Online (2013), “ Injustice is the violation of the rights of others; unjust or unfair action or treatment.” Martin Luther King Jr. defined an unjust law in the Letter from Birmingham Jail (1963), “ An unjust law is a human law that is not rooted in eternal law and natural law. Any law that uplifts human personality is just. Any law that degrades human personality is unjust. All segregation statutes are unjust because segregation distorts the soul and damages the personality. It gives the segregator a false sense of superiority and the segregated a false sense of inferiority.” Judeo-Christian ethics were applied to allow for civil disobedience during the protest. King believed that there are the laws that are legal, and the laws that are just. Justice is above legality, and it holds a moral context to it. In his words: “ A just law is a man made code that squares with the moral law, or the law of God. An unjust law is a code that is out of harmony with the moral law.”

I also feel it is important when thinking about what is just, and unjust to realize the importance between the what is legal and illegal, and see how these go hand in hand. Also, it is important to be able to notice the difference between the two of them. This way, we can figure out whether or not civil disobedience is ever acceptable. King had also mentioned a few examples of the differences between legality and justice in his Letter From Birmingham Jail. In that letter he reminds us of everything the Nazis and Adolf Hitler did during the Holocaust, and how it was apparently “ legal”. In Germany, they changed the laws to cover up what they had done.

It became this poor excuse for them brutally killing thousands of people. These people died based on their religious views, handicaps, and life-style

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choices. Although what they did was legal, what they did was not just. The laws they made were unjust, and because justice is a higher power than legality. Those laws and those acts must be changed. The injustice in Birmingham tied to all the communities in the south especially with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Which was an organization operating in every Southern state, with headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia. They had about eighty-five affiliate organizations that were all across the South.

The four steps to nonviolent campaigns are: 1.) Collect the facts to determine whether injustices are alive. Learn all you can about the problems you see in your community through media, social and civil organizations, and talk to people involved. 2.) Negotiation. Talk with both sides first. Then go to people in the community who are in trouble, and hurt by society. One should use humor, intelligence and grace to lead to solutions that benefit the greater good. 3.) Self-Purification. This is the most vital step and necessary in any non-violent campaign. This is when we acknowledge internally that personal sacrifices are needed for the sake of progress. 4.) Direct Action.

This is when negotiation failed to produce results, or when people need to draw broader attention to a problem. This can include peaceful demonstrations and letter writing campaigns. King resolved the “eye for an eye” Jewish ethical principle with the Christian “love one another” ethical principle of nonviolence. King (1963), said, “The old law of an eye for an eye leaves everybody blind. It’s immoral because it seeks to humiliate the opponent rather than win his understanding it seeks to annihilate rather than convert.” King restored friendly relations by gaining public sympathy. I think <https://assignbuster.com/martin-luther-king-essay-sample-essay-samples/>

King's ethical principles helped him defend against the charges that his protests and law breaking were "untimely" considering the political situation in Birmingham at the time.

This was because he kept peace and love number one, and wanted to ultimately achieve his goals. One area of conflict in our world today is violence. I feel King's positive yet aggressive actions to raise awareness about violence, and how it is breaking down our communities would be a big help. He would raise campaigns to promote peace and stress on how unhealthy violence in our communities is. That eventually if violence continues at this rate, there won't be any communities left to destroy. King (1963), said "violence is immoral because it thrives on hatred rather than love. It destroys community and makes brotherhood impossible. It leaves society in monologue rather than dialogue. That is why there has to be a change, and a stop against violence."

Injustice.(nd) Online Etymology Dictionary. Retrieved August 02, 2013, from Dictionary. com <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/injustice>.

King Jr., M. L. (1963). Letter from a Birmingham Jail. Retrieved from EBSCOhost database Academic Search Elite. <http://search.proquest.com.libproxy.edmc.edu/docview/205008318>