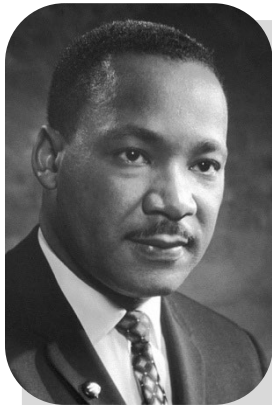


# Fight for your rights: Martin Luther King and Black Lives Activism



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<https://www.gettyimages.com/detail/photo/martin-luther-king-jr.-gettyimages>

## Martin Luther King

- Born on January 15, 1929, in Atlanta, Georgia, USA.
- Assassinated on April 4, 1968, in Memphis, Tennessee, USA.
- Known as a leader of the American Movement in the 1950s and 1960s.
- In 1964, King became the youngest person at the time to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, honored for his nonviolent activism against racial inequality.
- On April 4, 1968, King was shot on the balcony of his motel in Memphis, where he had traveled to support striking sanitation workers.



<https://www.gettyimages.com/detail/photo/martin-luther-king-jr.-gettyimages>

## “I have a dream”

- August 28, 1963, in Washington, D.C., at the Lincoln Memorial.
- The phrase “I have a dream” is repeated many times. His dream is that everyone has equal rights, no matter their skin color or origin
- The speech was a key moment in the fight for civil rights. It helped pushing forward the rights of black people.



## March on Washington

### General information

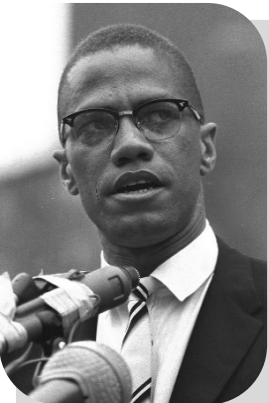
- August 28, 1963; 250.000 participants; result of the collaboration of the „Big Six“; main organizer was Bayard Rustin; peacefully; at the national mall and Lincoln memorial

### Main goals:

- racial equality; economic justice; work rights for African Americans and marginalized communities; civil rights; legislative Action

### Impact:

- help shift public opinion in favor of the civil rights movement; put pressure on the government;
- Civil Rights Act 1964 —> no discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.
- Voting rights act of 1965 —> protect voting rights of African Americans



## Malcolm X

- Born: Malcolm Little, May 19, 1925, Omaha, Nebraska.
- Family: Father, Earl Little, died; mother institutionalized; placed in an orphanage.
- Conversion: Joined the Nation of Islam (NOI) in prison; changed surname to “X.”
- Activism: Advocated black empowerment, criticized nonviolence, supported self-defense.
- Split from NOI: Left in 1964, converted to Sunni Islam, founded the OAAU.
- Death: Assassinated on February 21, 1965, by NOI members.

## Comparison of civil rights activists

	Martin Luther King	Ibraham X. Kendi
<b>1. View of the Future:</b>	he talks about his dream, about a hopeful vision that America will finally live up to its promise that everyone is equal. He describes this change as something America <i>should</i> achieve because it's the right thing to do	he describes the future more directly. They say that a time <i>will</i> come when people realize the only problem with Black people is that they're treated unfairly. This makes change sound like something that <i>has</i> to happen eventually.
<b>2. Focus of the Change:</b>	he imagines a future where people no longer judge each other by skin color but by their character, or who they really are. He hopes for a society where race doesn't matter anymore.	he focuses more on how Black people see themselves. They say the real issue is that Black people are taught to think there's something wrong with them. They believe true change will happen when Black Americans reject this idea.
<b>3. Tone and Message:</b>	he speaks in a hopeful, uplifting way, trying to bring all Americans together to work toward a fair society.	he speaks in a stronger, more direct way, encouraging Black Americans to recognize their own worth and fight for fairness.

Both passages are about hope for a future without racism. King emphasizes unity and America's duty to change, while Reynold sand Kendi focus on the importance of Black self-empowerment and courage.

### Black and White America

by Lenny Kravitz

Martin Luther King, **he had a vision**  
(And that's a fact)  
He **died so we could see**, that  
was his mission  
(So don't look back)

**There is no division**, don't you understand  
The **future looks as though it has come around**  
And maybe we have finally found our common ground  
**We're the children of our father**  
**If you're looking back don't bother**  
**We're black and white America**

In 1963 **my father married (A black woman)**  
And when they walked the streets, **they were in danger**  
(Look what you've done)

But they just **kept on walking forward hand in hand**  
The **future looks as though it has come around**  
And maybe we have finally found our common ground  
**We're the children of our father**  
**If you're looking back don't bother**  
**We're black and white America**

[...]

**We've waited so long**  
**We've waited so long**

[...]

Oh, yeah  
Black and white America  
Gonna keep on moving forward  
**Oh blow it out**

*Lyrics copied from LyricFind*

**"he had a vision"**  
**"he died so we could see"**

Marthin Luther King Jr. fought tirelessly for his vision of a world without racial discrimination and sacrificed his life to open people's eyes.

**"there is no division"**

Lenny Kravitz wants to convey the message that there shouldn't be any separation between people based on their race..

**"My father married a black woman"**  
**"they were in danger"**

Lenny Kravitz wants to highlight his personal connection to the struggle: interracial marriage was highly controversial at the time and interracial couples were harassed and discriminated.

**"they just kept on walking forward hand in hand"**  
**"the future looks as though it has come around"**

Despite challenges, especially racial injustice, people should keep hoping for a better future; it seems that equality and unity might finally become a reality, with racial injustice being reduced.

**"We're the children of our father"**  
**"If you're looking back don't bother"**  
**"We're black and white America"**

Regardless of race, we share a common human heritage. People should focus on the future, not the past. "Black and White America" represents a united America where racial injustice doesn't exist.

**"We've waited so long"**  
**"Oh blow it out"**

The path to an America without racism was very long and hard and everyone should eliminate the thoughts of discrimination from their minds.



PHOTOGRAPH BY JIM LEE

## “Respect” by Aretha Franklin

- The song from 1967 is about standing up for yourself and demanding fair treatment and recognition.
- Franklin repeatedly calls for mutual respect in the song
- The lyrics emphasize self-worth and highlight the importance of reciprocity in relationships.
- Franklin’s performance turned the song into an anthem of empowerment, resonating with both the civil rights and feminist movements.

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### Our take-home message

Every person, regardless their gender, origin, ethnicity or skin color must be treated equally. There is no “should”, it has to happen.

Together, our society can achieve great things, so we have to start working together and stop discriminating each other.

We must fight together and look forward to a brighter future.

