

# The Political Economy of Martin Luther King Jr Speaker Event

## Reflection by Jayden Hooper

Martin Luther King Jr's nonviolent campaign was the highlighting factor for the civil rights in 1964. In this webinar, Edward Dodson examined the vision that MLK Jr had for the political economy of America.

MLK Jr argued that Capitalism fails to provide necessities to many American people, Marxism inherently ignores individual human rights and Communism does not provide a place for god. He believed in Democratic Socialism to create equality for all Americans. Professor Dodson explained how MLK Jr looked to Ghandi as a great example for his nonviolent civil disobedience to make a stand for civil rights to all Americans and how this was only the first step to MLK Jr's greater vision.

Professor Dodson addressed MLK Jr's primary concern was poverty. Unemployment rates for black Americans was over twice the rate of white Americans in the 1950s. The civil rights movement was only the first step in combatting poverty. The eventual and "most effective solution" that MLK Jr had envisioned for the future was guaranteed income through progressive income tax. Professor Dodson believed this idea to be flawed; it would only be successful if millions of houses were built to avoid the new income to be swallowed by landlords pockets.

After Professor Dodson's lecture, there was discussion on voting; how nearly half of Americans do not vote. The discussion raised potential reasons for the lack of participants and potential solutions. Professor Dodson educated the listeners on how the Electoral College is a partial solution to combat educational inequality and a lack of turnout.

Coming from a Computer Science and Data Science background and a lack of involvement in politics, I have found this event to be very insightful. In my household, there were always two topics that were taboo to discuss; politics and religion. So much so, that it was only when I first left home had I even heard of what politics meant. With this background, I never felt confident enough in my education to vote myself, undermining my own opinions. Listening to this discussion on MLK Jr's view on politics

and the future for equality has given me insight to the layers of impact these decisions can have. In particular, the discussion around the relationship of guaranteed income and more housing needed has enabled me to realize the layers of complexity around politics further.

To take away from this experience, I feel like I have found more political philosophical value from this discussion. To honor MLK day, I will challenge myself and my readers to find deeper implications from political decision making and to challenge your own views on what is right from wrong.