

Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr.

Rhetoric, Media, and Death

Media Coverage

- Speeches and Assassinations
- These quotes are all from the *New York Times*
- If you want to see more on this, look at the supplemental material in the weekly calendar

"I Have a Dream"

- James Reston, journalist for the *New York Times*,
- “But Dr. King brought them alive in the late afternoon with a peroration that was an anguished echo from all the old American reformers.”
- “...as they demonstrated today, they had found an effective way to demonstrate for changes in the laws without breaking the law themselves.”
- Likens MLK to other great American leaders (all white leaders)
- Appreciates his use of the "democratic processes of the US"

"The Ballot or the Bullet"

- *New York Times*, Editorial
- "Malcolm X, the embittered racist... has called upon Negroes to form rifle clubs, ostensibly to defend lives and property in times of emergency"
- "His call is to break the law... he exposed himself to the Negroes and whites as the irresponsible demagogue he is."
- "The Negro civil rights movement has accomplished more in the past few years by nonviolence—by what its real leaders call active passive resistance—than by appeals to armed mobs."

"Beyond Vietnam"

- John Herbers, journal for the *New York Times*
- “The failure of men like Malcolm to establish a rapport with Negroes... it was apparent he had made no contact with audience.”
- “...nonviolence is not sterile passivity, but a powerful moral force which makes for social transformation.”
- He juxtaposed the "failures" of X with the "successes" of MLK

The Assassination of MLK

- “Dismay, shame, anger, and foreboding marked the nation’s reaction last night to the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s, murder.”
- “Men who care for humankind and struggle for its salvation through reason and faith have lost a leader of monumental stature.”
- “The vindication of Dr. King’s historic endeavors can only come through our renewed dedication to the human goals of brotherly love and equal justice which he so nobly advanced.”

The Assassination of MX

- “He was a case history, as well as an extraordinary and twisted man, turning many gifts to evil purpose.”
- “Malcolm X had the ingredients for leadership, but his ruthless and fanatical belief in violence not only set him apart from the reasonable leaders of the civil rights movement... it also marked him for a violent end.”
- “Yesterday someone came out of that darkness that he spawned and killed him.”

Civil Rights Leaders Lost

- John F. Kennedy, assassinated 11/22/63
- Medgar Evers, assassinated 6/12/63
- Malcom X, assassinated 2/21/65
- Martin Luther King Jr., assassinated 4/4/68
- Robert F. Kennedy, assassinated 6/6/68

