



MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. FEATURED WITH A PORTRAIT OF GHANDI. THE PHOTO WAS TAKEN AND ISSUED IN AN EDITION OF LIFE MAGAZINE.

KING

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"Muslims are a minority," she said. "I think the speech has affected Muslims in the way we are perceived by the public at large. The way people act may not change, but it has had an effect upon the laws and how they treat us. It has brought awareness for Muslims." Baig said celebrating this day goes beyond King's birthday; it should be remembered for his work. "This will permeate through our hearts throughout the years," she said.

MINORITY PERSPECTIVE

Miguel Gonzalez, a senior business management major and vice president of Lambda Theta Phi Latin Fraternity Inc., said he grew up in a city where racial discrimination existed and was felt by community members. "I don't think the message of the speech has been accomplished because there is not equality in the world," Gonzalez said. "Nothing will be perfect, but it has given people hope." Gonzalez said the speech helped minorities by giving them a sense of direction toward which they could fulfill their needs. "He helped us because he aimed toward minorities," Gonzalez said. "The speech gave us hope and direction. It gave promise; it brought us insight and it provided a

voice. It helped with the Caesar Chavez movement in California."

WOMEN PERSPECTIVE

Lovely Murrell, a senior anthropology major, said the words of King apply not only to minority groups, but also to the plight of women's rights. "Sometimes when people think about civil rights they automatically think of African-Americans," Murrell said. "I would like people to remember, especially a lot of the women on campus who now think that feminism is the new 'f-word,' that civil rights were fought for them. If it weren't for the civil rights and feminist movements, they wouldn't be at Texas A&M." Murrell said although discrimination has been banned from campus in the eyes of the law, it still exists covertly in people's attitudes. "As far as civil-rights issues or people getting treated differently, nowadays I think it's more hidden," she said. "It's not as open as it once was, and a lot of times it's hard for people to recognize. The people who are saying 'This is not right' are sometimes looked at as troublemakers." Murrell said people of different sexual orientations often are overlooked in equality and civil rights, even by other minority groups. "Civil rights are for lesbians, gays, bisexual and transgendered people," she said. "It doesn't matter if you like them or not, or if you think they're going

to hell or not." Murrell said there are many similarities between the struggles of African-Americans and the struggle of lesbians, gays and bisexuals for equal rights, but not enough recognition. "I think there needs to be more coalition-building," she said. "Even though the lesbian and gay and bisexual community is fighting for the same causes and issues [as ethnic minorities], we're too busy identifying with one aspect of our life that we don't see the other people around who are trying to attain the same goals. It would be better if those couple of thousands got together and built a coalition group, while not denying their heritage." "If one group is oppressed, everybody is," Murrell said. "There's still a lot of work to be done."

AFRICAN-AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE

Michael Stewart, a senior mechanical engineering major and president of the Pan-Hellenic Council, said discrimination on campus today may not be vocalized, but is definitely put into action. "A lot of times, in words everybody is equal, but in practice I don't believe so," Stewart said. "A lot of people from my council were saying how a black girl could get on a bus and some Caucasian girls could get on a bus, and guys would go out of their way to make sure the Caucasian girls get a seat while the black girl has to stand. That's one of those things where it's in words but not in practice." Stewart believes certain groups will need to make sacrifices for equality to become reality. "I like to use the analogy of a Monopoly game," Stewart said.

"Everybody's playing, but only a certain group is able to buy up everything for the first two hours. And then, all of a sudden, they say, 'Now that we own everything you are able to buy something.' What can I get? Unfortunately, to rectify the problem, somebody is going to have to give up something for awhile. That hurts the people who have to give up something, but if we truly want to equal it out, that's just the way it has to happen." Stewart said the leadership of King has greatly inspired him as a student leader. "When I think back on my freshman year here it was very hard being at a school like this," he said. "The thing that used to get me through was when I thought about people like [King] who faced insurmountable odds. People like him died for me to have the opportunity to come to a university like this. I am eternally grateful to people like him and the determination they had, and that gives me the determination to go on." As president of an African-American fraternity, Stewart feels ethnic pride and unity among races can coexist. "The key is not whether they are separate or not," Stewart said. "The key is 'How do they work together'. I live in my household, and you live in your household, but we still can be called neighbors." Inequality, disharmony, ignorance and fear. In 1998, these issues still plague the nation as King's cure is met with apathy and denial on college campuses. Fortunately there are students who have been inspired by King's words and are attempting to fulfill his dream. However, the alarm King sounded against the infiltration of inequality is too often memorialized by students who get to silence their alarm clocks for just another national holiday.

Quote for the Day

This week's theme: New Year's Resolutions.

"New Year's resolutions are a half-hearted attempt to alter an intrinsic behavior which you thoroughly enjoy. Why make 'em if you're gonna break 'em?"

— Scott Galloway
Junior health education major

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