Civil Rights Movement: Martin Luther King Jr. And Malcolm X

The civil rights movement was a political movement for social justice that took place during the 1950/60s. The movement mainly worked with providing the black people of the United States with equal civil rights such as the right to vote in elections on an equal footing with whites and to eliminate racist discrimination against black Americans (History Editors). There were many civil rights activists who are known for their fight against social injustice and their impact on the lives of all oppressed people. Some of them are still inspirational role models such as Martin Luther King Jr, Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks, and Malcolm X. The topic of this essay is about two of the most important civil rights leaders, Martin Luther King Jr and Malcolm X. This essay will contain a comparison between these two leaders, what they fought for, what they accomplished and whether or not they are good role models for this generation.

Martin Luther King Jr was one of the most well-known advocates for non-violent social change at his time. He was born in Atlanta, Georgia, and was raised in an activist family. King had extraordinary oratorical skills and personal courage. His first protest was the Montogomery bus boycott in 1955. The bus company required black people to give their seat up to white people or stand in the back of the bus. The protest gained followers quickly, and it led to a citywide boycott of the bus system until the rules were changed. Over the following years, King showed his faith in non-violent protests and leaded non-violent boycotts, protests, and marches. (URL, Youthforhumanrights).

King’s goal was to raise the public awareness of racism, to put a end to racial discrimination and segregation in the United States. He was inspired from his christian faith and the peaceful teachings of Mahatma Ghandi, who also were an activist. Kings beliefs were that all people should be treated equally and have right to live a honest and peaceful life regardless of race, social status and occupation. He achieved numerous acheivements through his strategies such as his strong words and acts of non-violent resistance. Some of the acheivements are as mentioned, leading the bus boycott which resulted in his favor, he was the first president of Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) which had a large role in the civil rights movement, he also was one of the leaders of the “big six”civil rights organizations who organized the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom representing SCLC. Last but not least he delivered an important speech during this march which is called “i have a dream”. This speech has been defined as 'triumph of managed protest' and was a huge success. As a result Martin Luther king Jr has acheived a lot in a short period of time with a reasonable strategy.

Moving forward to Malcolm X. Malcolm X was an American civil rights activist, a former preacher of the Nation of Islam, and a supporter of black nationalism. He was born in Nebraska and spent his childhood in foster care since his father was murdered and the mother was hospitalized. He encouraged his fellow black Americans to defend themselves from white violence 'by any means possible,' His presence and oratorical skills enabled him to gain national recognition in the Islamic community, a belief system that fused Islam with black nationalism. His story started when he was in prison for larcerny. Malcolm first came across the teachings of Elijah Muhammad, leader of the lost-founded nation of Islam, a black nationalist group that identified white people as the devil. Soon after, Malcolm took the last name 'X' to signify his

rejection of his 'slave' name (History Editors).