

The Legacy of Love

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Blood streaming beneath my face, spit of those who deem themselves inferior to myself striking my battered and torn skin, and my eyes swollen to the point of virtual blindness. This is what I imagine myself being forced to face if I were living in the 1960's.

We are shielded from the truth as children. Throughout my primary years of schooling I was taught that America was glorious and allowed opportunities for those from every corner of the Earth with welcoming arms. Going into high school, I was in for a rude awakening. Everything that I had been taught had been not a lie, but a cringe worthy twisted and manipulated version of the true history of America which molded it to appear more morally correct than it was in actuality. The violence, hurt, and misery inflicted upon people due to the fact that they simply did not have the same colored skin as another was just a fact of life that I had to absorb and eventually wrap my mind around. "One day we will learn that the heart can never be totally right when the head is totally wrong," are words of wisdom from Dr. King himself in *Strength to Love*. With this state of mind that we have today, of how violence is normal and often is viewed as a normal everyday occurrence, nothing will ever be right because what is going on in our minds is totally wrong.

What makes matters worse is that up until this day there is still racial discrimination that takes place in America on a regular basis. It's terrifying to know that what once divided our nation in half is still a prominent issue. We should have learned from our past, yet here we are. Everyone is fighting, but for what? Is it to prove ourselves as better than one race over another?

Is it to assert the authority we were given and in turn over stepping our boundaries? Is it to redeem those who have been discriminated against before us?

What is the point in it all? Surely this is not the legacy we want to leave and be remembered for. Surely this is not how we want our future generations of children to proceed with life. Surely this is not the example we want to set for the rest of the world to see.

Nowadays, it's easy for everyone to simply fight, but what will throwing fists resolve? I witness fights at school, on the news, on television shows, and often in my nightmares. There's no escaping it. We are surrounded in a violent culture which has become the norm in our society. Often at school you can walk through the hallway and hear, "Oh dang! That girl just got dragged," as a group of students replays a video recording of two young women from our school violently drag each other to the ground, without thinking about the consequences. One of the young women was almost pushed under a car with her head bluntly hitting the ground. This sort of head trauma could be detrimental and possibly lead to brain damage. Nothing is worth this degree of violence.

It may sound like a joke, but students have fought over things as simple as a french-fry in our lunchroom as well as other neighboring schools. As dumb as it sounds, it honestly is a recurring issue. This is what our society has taught our future generations. These children find that it is normal and natural to fight others for any given reason because violence is so common in pop culture and in our community.

Violence is a coward's way out. Although, many students at school would strongly disagree with this statement and would most likely want to get a few punches in on anyone who believe this to be so. It takes a strong person to hold back their anger and to control their wave of negative emotions as they stream through their mind like angry sharks waiting for their prey. Having enough strength to hold back irrational physical outbursts can prove that a person has

enough self-control, as Dr. King stated in *Strength to Love*, “Courage faces fear and thereby masters it.”

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