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Research Draft

Protest literature is work that address real sociopolitical issues and express objection against them. Also, in some form of way it can show art, emotion, and lessons to learn from it. We may think protest literature does not exist not, but it still do. Martin Luther King Jr. talked about some of the issues in his famous “I Have a Dream Speech “and “Letter From Brigham”. Even our 35th president John F. Kennedy talked about some political issues in “On Civil Rights” and the “Inaugural Address”. These speeches has been analyzing by students, professors, and the media. Some may believe MLK and JFK was the best protest literature author there is.

During the time of mid 1950s MLK was a Baptist minister and a social activist. Around this time it was a lot of racism going on where the colors had to use different restroom and not getting the same education as the whites. When Dr. King was younger he was a “gifted student” (A&E Network) so he went to a segregated public school. By the time he was fifteen he was admitted to Morehouse College. Both father and grandfather attend their studying medicine and law, but Dr. King did not want to he wanted to be a ministry. He earned a Bachelor in Religion and enrolled in the graduate program. Then, he soon got his doctor degree and became a pastor in “Montgomery, Alabama” (A& E network). Dr. King made an impact during this because he was considered as a “key role in American civil rights movement” (A&E network).King was very passionate about black communities and having equal rights. “Martin Luther King Jr., led a boycott that ended segregated busing in Montgomery, Alabama” (Civil Right Movement) .During the time of Montgomery boycott and March in Washington it brought of Civil and Voting right act of 1964-65. The March on Washington was for jobs and freedom which also talked about civil rights. He presented his “famous speech “I Have a Dream”’( March on Washington Fast Facts). He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize and we remember each year in January. Sadly Dr. King got assassinated while supporting a strike.

John F. Kennedy was our 35th president and American politician around the time of 1960s. JFK was one the first to be a young “Roman Catholic” (A&E network) to be in office. He occurred health problem during his childhood disease. As he gotten older he was diagnose with a disorder called Addison’s disease. He had attended private school in Boston. Once he got enrolled to Harvard, he traveled in Europe as his dad secretary. He joined the U.S. navy around 1941, but he left the navy at the end of 1944. He prepared to run for congress and later on went to House of Representatives. Kennedy ran for president in 1960, where he won and was elected to be the president. Kennedy ended up dealing with civil right during his presidency. Where during the March on Washington which was dealing with MLK at that time. Shortly JFK was assassinated in Dallas before he had another speaking.

MLK and JFK was living when civil right was going on. They both was active during this time trying to find a solution to stop it. King had been arrested for being a part of a “peaceful group attempting to integrate” (Grier) a department store. During the time Kennedy was not the president, but he was running for it. “Many historians feel it shifted crucial votes in Northern states away from Richard Nixon to give JFK his razor-thin victory” (Grier) because Kennedy was concern about African Americans. They both shared their belief in the era, but they were not close because they had different tone toward civil rights. King reached out to Kennedy he spoke about “against segregation” (Grier).

During MLK and JFK time they started doing protest literature dealing with civil rights. They both was speaker and authors of some of their famous literature and speeches. Remember Dr. King famous speech “I Have Dream” he talked about some of the problems and how he wanted to see it get fixed. As well as JFK “Civil Right Address” it also talk about civil rights. “We preach freedom around the world, and we mean it, and we cherish our freedom here at home” (Eidenmuller). This is a quote from JFK Civil Right Address where he talks that we do not cherish our freedom how we suppose to. “Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!” (Eidenmuller) this quote is from “I Have a Dream” speech. Where we can see that these two men included freedom in their speeches. They both had tone to their speeches. They organization was not so the same. They talked about different topic in their speeches. Some have analysis these two pieces of literature. For “I Have a Dream” it constantly speaks of Anaphora which means the word is constantly being repeated. Also, MLK used examples in his speech and used a heavy amount of metaphors. Some gave negative and positive comments to his work. As for JFK he used “ethos, pathos, and logos” (Lutz) during his speech. He was a persuasive man so by him using this devices in his speech he thought that he could reach to the audience. “it ought to be possible for American students of any color to attend any public institution” (Lutz). Kennedy address some of the ethics issues in his speech. Also, he use some emotions to persuade them more. He brings some of us his attention to African American in the quote of “We have a right to expect that the Negro community will be responsible” (Eidenmuller). He used some statics in his work to state facts to the audience. He propose a solution that “Next week I shall ask the Congress of the United States to act to make a commitment” (Lutz). He wanted everyone has equal right in the society.

Not only did they have some similar and different ideas, but they had more famous literature during their time. “The world is very different now. For man holds in his mortal hands the power to abolish all forms of human poverty and all forms of human life” (Inaugural Address). This quote is from JFK speech Inaugural Address where dealt with some of the issues during his time. The speech was written the time Kennedy became. He discussed that he had some key steps to make his speech successful. He used figurative speech as in alliteration, metaphors and imagery. For example “Let us go forth to lead the land we love"(Atkinson) this is an example of alliteration. He also gave some political facts during this speech. He talked about the ethics of our country how united and powerful we were. Also, this inaugural speech did not base on JFK first presidency it was more to enlighten others as who he was. Then, goes to MLK “Letter to Birmingham” which was written while he was in Alabama jail. Basically, the letter talks about “finding, negotiation, self-purification, and direct action” (enotes). He and Kennedy used ethos, pathos, and logos in their speeches. “Now, there is nothing wrong with an ordinance which requires a permit for a parade, but when the ordinance is used to preserve segregation and to deny citizens the First Amendment privilege of peaceful assembly and peaceful protest, then it becomes unjust” ( Editors). Also, he still spoke on how segregation played a part in his arrest. These two speeches wasn’t too much alike, they only had ethos, pathos, and logos in common. For surely they wanted equal rights for everyone and for people to get a message out of what they were saying. Try changing the world is what they strive for getting at.

In conclusion, I learned that JFK was more inspiring than I thought he was during his presidency. JFK had a big impact back then and maybe even now. We may think segregation has stopped because of all the protesting that was happening around the time it started, but we still see it now. While reading this speeches of this to protest literature I would have thought the world would be a different place , but it only seem that it got worst as the years went by. Segregation is not ever going to change the way I see it in the next generation.

My reflection on the “I Have A Dream” speech I say it was very inspirational during his time and even our generation now. Some people keep his quotes up on their walls for a motivational. I liked this speech because it motivates me to know that I can do some and be proud of it no matter what others may say. I would say the “Letter To Birmingham” was inspiring and gave some good point, but I would not say that it was very much interesting. It did not really grab my attention as much, but I disliked it because he went to jail just because he was boycotting. That is no reason to put anyone behind bars, he is just expressing his feelings to my understanding. Kennedy “Civil Right Address” was not what I thought it would be, but it was okay. It was interesting I would not say I did not like nor I liked it, but it something I learned a lot from. “Inaugural Address” was inspirational to me because he did it not only because it was his first presidency, he did it to show what he could bring and what he wanted to change. I liked this speech because he was a political man and he was in office, but not as the president. So, he stated what need to be done in his speech.

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