



# 2015 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Art, Writing & Multimedia Contest

Hannah Zang (11th Grade)  
Magnificat High School  
Principal. Moira Clark  
Teacher, Linda Evans

Something I really struggle to grasp in our society today is why we still have not figured out how to be accepting of everyone despite their race, ethnicity, gender sexual orientation or physical, mental, and emotional disabilities. Instead of putting people down because of our differences, we should be celebrating them. God made each and every one of us unique for a reason, and it was not for us to ostracize and judge people. As a person of faith, I think it is my obligation to stand up for those that are oppressed. Sexual orientation is a very prominent issue in our society today. They are excluded and denied basic rights because they are different.

Sexual orientation is a very controversial topic and there are numerous views on it. It did not become a widely known issue until the last decade or so, which explains why it is still a touchy subject for many people. Before people felt that they had to hide who they truly were in society to be able to be a functioning citizen, but in the last couple of years people have felt that it is their right to be open about their sexual orientation and they are completely right. People should not have to hide who they are just to keep a job or marry their partner. We are all meant to be equal, which means having the same rights as a black, white, straight, or homosexual person.

Since sexual orientation is a leading issue in our society, especially in our high school years, while everyone is just trying to figure out who they are, I think my peers and I should work towards getting equal rights for those that are discriminated against their sexual orientation. People are fired from their jobs because of this issue and it really should not be that big of a deal. Is it affecting their work ethic or how productive they are? Most likely it is not because they are the same person as before when their sexual orientation was not public. People are making a much bigger deal of people's sexual orientation that it needs to be, which then causes a chain reaction. It becomes a big deal, which leads to becoming an issue that needs to be addressed when in reality it did not need to happen like this. I understand that people have more conservative views and do agree with their choices, but it is their life not yours and people need to learn to respect that.

There is a multitude of ways that people can be informed on this quarrelsome topic. But I think the best way to make a positive impact and work towards equality is by educating our generation's young people or more specifically grades seventh through twelfth grade and continuing into college. The more people become aware of this issue, the more it will become possible to execute a plan to end the discrimination. Young people do not realize how truly influential we can be in society, but if enough of us stand up for what is right, we will begin to see a change in our society. We can change people's minds for the better by helping them see that those affected by sexual orientation discrimination deserve to have the same rights as heterosexual people and that this do affect whether they are a good person or not.

In conclusion, if we educate people and make it known that this has become an eminent issue in our society, we will be able to make a change. Educating people is one of the most important things we can do. Through word of mouth people will be able to hear how they are being deprived their rights and that we need to take action in order for our country to live up to its motto of "The Land of the Free."

*"I Have A Dream"*

