

Diversity is defined as “differing from one to the other”. A word that is synonymous with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. A word that everyone knows, but not all practice. America, the melting pot of the world, the ultimate in diversity... to me, diversity means simply, America.

In America, we have Asians, African Americans, Hispanics and Native Americans, to mention a few. It is not uncommon to a black man with a white woman or visa versa. Many times, couples are discriminated against for loving someone whose race is different. Many times, diversity is limited to race, but in all actuality, diversity is anything that could be different from person to person or group to group.

Things as simple as nationality or something more complicated, like religion. Not much is said of Italians or Russians. But after the 9/11 tragedy, Muslims are discriminated against, simply because they are Muslim. American women who “associate themselves” with Muslim men (or visa versa) are also discriminated against.

In Martin Luther King’s time, it was not only uncommon, but it was *unheard of*, to see two people of different races together, let alone as a couple. In today’s society, this is extremely common when compared to the 1950’s and 1960’s. People like MLK and Rosa Parks along with Ida B. Wells and John Duffy are symbols of diversity. They are symbols of America.

Admittedly, Americans can be very closed minded when it comes to racial change and sometimes even equality. It took thirteen years for African

Americans to gain their equality. Now, Americans are somewhat hesitant to the idea of Muslims in our cities and towns. It goes back to Hitler's days, Germany and the Jewish struggle for freedom and equality in *their* cities and towns.

I, as a proud American citizen, think that America is much more than Hitler's Germany. I believe that we are much better versed than our 1955 self. I am confident that we are stronger in our expectations, but still gentle enough to see the suffering in other places, such as Iraq, and set fear and doubt aside to see that people need our help. *That* is diversity.

So, in conclusion, diversity, to me, is setting aside uncertainties and misgivings and identifying everyone as equal and the same. In this sense, meaning that every person; white or black, Asian or Hispanic, Christian or Buddhist, male or female, is the same, in every sense of the word. So, America, the great melting pot, the vital organ of the body of diversity, even with our faults, we remain the steadfast body of equality and equal opportunity for all, no matter your race, gender, religion or beliefs.