

More than a Dream



Dr. Darryl Brice said he appreciated this photo of Dr. King because it looks as if Dr. King is pointing to the viewers and asking them what they are going to do to promote justice.

“If you look at that ‘I Have a Dream’ speech that everyone references ... look at the front part,” said Dr. Darryl Brice as he gave Clark College’s Martin Luther King Jr. Day keynote speech to an audience gathered in Gaiser Student Center on January 22. “Everyone talks about the dream, but there was a nightmare part where he talked about the reality of what was going on at the time.”

Brice, an Instructor of Sociology and Diversity and Globalism Studies at Highline Community College, went on to expand on his speech’s central thesis—that the more radical elements of Dr. King’s legacy have been “co-opted or omitted” in favor of a softer, less challenging image of the civil rights leader as a dreamer. As Brice put it, “You don’t get arrested over 30 times for having a dream.”

Brice detailed aspects of Dr. King’s politics that he said are often omitted: his opposition to the Vietnam War, his anti-poverty activism, his criticism of income and wealth disparities between African-Americans and white Americans, and his harsh criticism of well-meaning white liberals who did not recognize their own internal racism. He also pointed out that in his day, Dr. King was considered so dangerous that the FBI put him on its COINTELPRO watch list.

Brice continued by saying that “Dr. King’s dream was never attained.” He presented charts showing that great disparities remain in the wealth and incomes of African-Americans and white Americans. He urged audience members to “have the same

courage” Dr. King showed to fight against injustice. When asked what college students in particular could do, he answered, “Hold us accountable—that’s what college students have always done.”



Dr. Darryl Brice, *white shirt*, with members of Clark’s MLK Planning Committee and President Bob Knight, *third from left*.

The event, presented by Clark’s MLK Planning Committee and sponsored by the Office of Equity and Diversity and the Service-Learning and Volunteer Program, was part of the college’s official celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

A native of Baltimore, Maryland, Dr. Brice attended Frostburg State University, where he received his bachelor’s degree in Political Science and Justice Studies. He received his master’s and doctoral degrees in Sociology from Loyola University Chicago. He has taught at Highline since 2003, and in 2008 was recognized as its Faculty Member of the Year. In 2007 the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints honored him with the Teachers Assisting in Discovery award. In 2009 he was the recipient of the NISOD (National Institute for Staff and Development) Excellence Award. In addition, Dr. Brice has appeared in *Who’s Who Among America’s Teachers*.

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley