Aim:

Why has Bayard Rustin, the main organizer of the 1963 March on Washington and an important leader in the civil rights movement, been hidden from American history?

Instructional Objectives:

Students will be able to:

1. identify Bayard Rustin and describe the main accomplishments of his life;
2. define: non-violence, pacifism, direct action, civil rights, segregation, unemployment, minimum wage, executive order;
3. explain Rustin's philosophy of non-violent direct action, and provide a reasoned opinion on whether or not they would have been willing to practice it as Rustin did in the cause of civil rights;
4. describe Rustin's status as an outsider – African-American, pacifist, socialist and gay – and explain how outsider status might make a person more aware of injustice;
5. explain why the 1963 March on Washington was a very important milestone in the African-American freedom struggle.

Grade Level: Secondary, Grades 6-8

Common Core Standards

Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.6 Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.7 Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.9 Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.10 By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.1 Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.9 Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis reflection, and research.

Overarching Understanding:

Bayard Rustin was a key figure in the development of the civil rights movement, from the first freedom rides to the Montgomery Bus Boycott to the founding of the Southern Christian

Leadership Conference to the 1963 March on Washington. Yet his contributions are generally not well known. He has been hidden from American history due to his outsider status – not just as an African-American, but also as a pacifist who went to prison rather than participate in World War II, to his socialism, and to his sexual orientation.

Length:
This lesson may take up to two 40 minute periods, depending upon what is covered.

Resource Materials:
- Film "Brother Outsider" on life of Bayard Rustin
- PBS POV Website on "Brother Outsider" (http://www.pbs.org/pov/brotheroutsider/)
- Discussion Guide for "Brother Outsider" provided at the end of this lesson plan.
- "Life of Bayard Rustin" adapted from Spartacus Education provided at end of this lesson plan.
- Bayard Rustin essay on *Non-Violence vs. Jim Crow* provided at end of this lesson plan. (available at http://explorepahistory.com/odocument.php?docId=1-4-183)

About The Lesson:
To prepare students for each day of the lesson, they should do homework. In preparation for the first day, students should read the "Life of Bayard Rustin" and answer questions at the end; in preparation for the second day, students should read Rustin's "Non-Violence vs. Jim Crow" essay and answer questions at the end.

Day One:
Motivating Exercise:
Have students discuss with a partner a time they may have believed they were unfairly treated or denied their rights. How did that make you feel? Do you believe that experiencing unfair treatment makes you more or less likely to stand up for others when they are unfairly treated?

Lesson Development:
Will show excerpts from film "Brother Outsider: The Life of Bayard Rustin."
Questions for students:
1. Bayard Rustin describes himself and his comrades as "a group of troublemakers." Do you think that this is a good description? Why or why not?

2. Do you think that Bayard is right that the "power of troublemakers" is to "make things unworkable" for those who are engaged in oppressing others?

3. Do you think that Bayard's status as an outsider – African-American, pacifist, socialist and gay man – made him more aware of injustice, and more likely to fight it, whatever form it takes?

4. One of Bayard's most important contributions to the African-American freedom struggle was organizing the 1963 March on Washington. What were the goals of the March? If you had been alive in 1963, would you have participated in the march?

Day Two:

Motivating Exercise:

Do you think it takes more courage to engage in non-violent direct action, as Bayard Rustin did in confronting Jim Crow laws in the South, or to physically fight back against oppression?

Lesson Development:

1. In the reading in last night's homework, Bayard Rustin refused to sit in the back of the bus. Where did the bus driver expect Bayard Rustin to sit? What motivated Rustin to defy the law?

2. How did Rustin respond to the driver and to the police?

3. Many of you are familiar with the story of Rosa Parks. How does Rustin's story compare to that of Rosa Parks?

4. Do you think that Rustin and Parks just decided to refuse to sit in the back of the bus on the spur of the moment, or was it part of a thought-out strategy for confronting Jim Crow laws?

5. What does this story reveal about Rustin's character? Do you admire him? Would you be willing to do what he did in a fight against injustice? Why or why not?

6. What does this story tell us about the philosophy of nonviolence?

7. Can you imagine responding to a beating as Rustin did, without fighting back? What do you think this would feel like? How might it affect your opponent?

Divide students up into groups of four. Have them identify an issue which they believe is an injustice, and identify how non-violent direct action could be taken to confront that injustice. Do a report out.

Summary Question:

What do you think was Rustin's most important contributions to the African-American freedom struggle? What could be done to have it more widely recognized?

Discussion Guide to Accompany

Brother Outsider

Rediscovering Bayard Rustin, a forgotten freedom fighter

BAYARD RUSTIN—A VISIONARY YET largely unknown civil rights strategist, organizer and activist—is the subject of a compelling new documentary premiering on PBS on Martin Luther King Jr. Day (Monday, January 20). This guide is intended to introduce Rustin and encourage viewing and discussion of *Brother Outsider*, a 90-minute film produced and directed by filmmakers Nancy Kates and Bennett Singer.

> "It is hard for me to think of a man who was more talented than Bayard Rustin. Why did he remain in the background . . . never coming forward in the full measure of his great talent?"
>
> Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton, quoted in *Brother Outsider: The Life of Bayard Rustin*

A.P.

Born in West Chester, Pennsylvania, in 1912, Rustin began his 60-year career as an activist while in high school, when he protested segregation at a restaurant in his hometown. Rustin organized the first "Freedom Rides" during the late 1940s and met Martin Luther King Jr. in 1956, after traveling to Montgomery, Alabama, to assist with the boycott of the city's segregated bus system. Upon his arrival, Rustin discovered guns inside King's house and quickly persuaded boycott leaders to adopt complete nonviolence. Known as the "American Gandhi," Rustin is credited with helping to mold the younger King into an international symbol of nonviolence, and with organizing the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom—the largest protest America had ever seen. Despite these achievements, Rustin was silenced, threatened and fired from leadership positions—sometimes because of his uncompromising political beliefs, but more often because he was an openly gay man in a fiercely homophobic era.

Getting Started

1. Ask students: Have you ever heard of Bayard Rustin? What do you know about him? Why do you think some figures are hidden from history?

2. Why do you think the new film on Rustin is called *Brother Outsider*?

While Viewing

As students watch the film, ask them to note each time that Rustin challenged injustice, and to identify moments when Rustin himself was the target of injustice. What were the results of each incident? What do these moments reveal about Rustin's character?

After Viewing

Brother Outsider can spark discussion and critical thinking on a broad range of topics. Questions to tackle with students include:

■ ACTIVISM AND PROTEST What does Rustin mean when he calls for a group of "angelic troublemakers" to confront society? Was Rustin himself a troublemaker? How? Define "Jim Crow." What dangers did Rustin face in challenging Jim Crow in 1947?

■ THE POWER OF NONVIOLENCE What is nonviolent direct action? Why is it effective? Can it still work in today's world? Explain these statements from the documentary: Rustin says, "There is no need to beat me. I am not resisting you." Rustin's colleague Bill Sutherland states, "Racial injustice is violence." *(For more on nonviolence, see next page.)*

■ RUSTIN AND KING What does the film tell you about Rustin's relationship with Martin Luther King Jr.? How does the film illuminate Dr. King's development as a leader? Does it change what you think about Dr. King? Why?

■ COMPETING IDEOLOGIES Respond to the two debates in the film, between Bayard Rustin and Malcolm X, and between Rustin and Stokely Carmichael. How do these debates continue today?

■ THE MARCH ON WASHINGTON What was its goal? How and why did the March movement begin in the 1940s? How did Senator Strom Thurmond attempt to derail the March in 1963? How did black leaders respond? What did the March accomplish? What do you think it would have felt like to be at the March on August 28, 1963?

■ DISSENT AND SURVEILLANCE Why was Rustin under FBI surveillance? What does it mean to question someone's loyalty as an American? Does that happen today? How?

■ "INVISIBLE MAN" Why do you think Rustin has been hidden from history? How did homophobia affect his career? Do you agree with his statement that gay rights are now our barometer for judging where people stand on human rights issues generally?

■ "ONE HUMAN FAMILY" What is your reaction to Rustin's point that all people are connected?

■ PAST TO PRESENT How is Rustin's story a call to action for today? Which aspects of his story do you find most inspiring? What message do you take away from the film?

Coming to PBS on Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Brother Outsider: The Life of Bayard Rustin

National PBS Premiere on the "P.O.V." series Monday, January 20, 2003 at 10 P.M. (check local listings)

www.pbs.org/pov/brotheroutsider

Educators have permission to tape the PBS broadcast for classroom use.

Nonviolence vs. Jim Crow

BY BAYARD RUSTIN

As Brother Outsider *reveals, Rustin believed deeply in the power of nonviolence to bring about social change. In the following 1942 essay, Rustin tells how he used nonviolence to challenge segregation on a southern bus. By quoting a segregationist, Rustin reminds readers that civil rights activists faced not only physical abuse, but also verbal abuse in the form of offensive language.*

Recently I was planning to go from Louisville to Nashville by bus. I bought my ticket, boarded the bus, and, instead of going to the back, sat down in the second seat. The driver saw me, got up, and came toward me.

"Hey, you. You're supposed to sit in the back seat."

"Why?"

"Because that's the law. Niggers ride in back."

I said, "My friend, I believe that is an unjust law. If I were to sit in back I would be condoning injustice."

Angry, but not knowing what to do, he got out and went into the station. He soon came out again, got into his seat, and started off.

Finally the driver, in desperation, must have phoned ahead, for about thirteen miles north Nashville I heard sirens approaching. The bus came to an abrupt stop, and a police car and two motorcycles drew up beside us with a flourish. Four policemen got into the bus and came to my seat.

"Get up, you ___ ___ nigger!"

"Why?" I asked. "I believe that I have a right to sit here," I said quietly. "If I sit in the back of the bus I am depriving that child"—I pointed to a little white child of five or six—"of the knowledge that there is injustice here, which I believe it is his right to know. It is my sincere conviction that the power of love in the world is the greatest power existing. If you have a greater power, my friend, you may move me."

How much they understood of what I was trying to tell them I do not know. By this time they were impatient and angry. As I would not move, they began to beat me about the head and shoulders, and I shortly found myself knocked to the floor. Then they dragged me out of the bus and continued to kick and beat me.

Knowing that if I tried to get up or protect myself in the first heat of their anger they would construe it as an attempt to resist and beat me down again, I forced myself to be still and wait for their kicks, one after another. Then I stood up, spreading out my arms parallel to the ground, and said, "There is no need to beat me. I am not resisting you."

For Discussion or Writing

1. Where did the bus driver expect Bayard Rustin to sit? What motivated Rustin to defy the law?

2. How did Rustin respond to the driver and to the police?

3. What does this story reveal about Rustin's character? What does it show about the philosophy of nonviolence?

4. Can you imagine responding to a beating as Rustin did, without fighting back? What do you think this would feel like? How might it affect your opponent?

For Further Exploration

Books

Anderson, Jervis. *Bayard Rustin: Troubles I've Seen* (New York: HarperCollinsPublishers, 1997).

Branch, Taylor. *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954–63* (New York: Touchstone, 1989).

Haskins, James. *Bayard Rustin: Behind the Scenes of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Hyperion, 1997).

Rustin, Bayard. *Down the Line: The Collected Writings of Bayard Rustin* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1971).

COURTESY ESTATE OF BAYARD RUSTIN

Rustin "put his body on the line" in myriad protests.

UPI/CORBIS-BETTMANN

Rustin was architect of the civil rights movement's largest protest: the 1963 March on Washington.

On the Web

www.pbs.org/pov/brotheroutsider
Extensive background on Rustin's life, including audio of his 1962 debate with Malcolm X, samples of his singing, and a section on origins of the Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday.

www.stanford.edu/group/King
The Martin Luther King, Jr. Papers Project's website, featuring in-depth content by and about King.

COURTESY FELLOWSHIP OF RECONCILIATION

Rustin speaking on nonviolence in 1943.

Presented by P.O.V. on PBS. A co-presentation of the Independent Television Service and the National Black Programming Consortium, with funding provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

The Life of Bayard Rustin

(adapted from Spartacus Educational: http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/USArustin.htm)

Bayard Rustin was born March 17, 1910. He was influenced by the religious and political beliefs of his grandmother, Julia Rustin, who raised him. A pacifist who did not believe in the use of violence, Julia was a member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Leaders of the NAACP, such as W. E. B. Du Bois and James Weldon Johnson, sometimes stayed with the family while on their tours of the country.

As a young man Rustin campaigned against Jim Crow laws in his hometown West Chester, Pennsylvania. One of his school friends later said: "Some of us were ready to give up the fight and accept the status quo, but he never would. He had a strong inner spirit."

Rustin moved to Harlem and began studying at City College. He soon became involved in the campaign to free the nine African Americans that had been falsely convicted for raping two white women on a train. Known as the Scottsboro Boys case, Rustin was radicalized by what he believed was an obvious case of white racism. It was at this time that Rustin joined the American Communist Party, as the Communists were active in defending the Scottsboro Boys.

In 1941 Rustin met the African American trade union leader, A. Philip Randolph. A member of the Socialist Party, Randolph was a radical democrat and a strong opponent of communism: he felt that the Communist Party followed the dictates of the Soviet Union and its leader, Joseph Stalin, and would put those dictates above the fight for the rights of African-Americans. As a result of Randolph's influence, Rustin left the American Communist Party. Rustin helped Randolph plan a proposed March on Washington in 1941, in protest against racial discrimination in the armed forces. The march was called off when President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8802 barring discrimination in defense industries and federal bureaus (the Fair Employment Act).

As a pacifist, Rustin refused to serve in the armed forces. He was arrested and charged with violating the Selective Service Act. At his trial, Rustin was found guilty and sentenced to three years in federal prison.

In 1942, Rustin joined George Houser and James Farmer in founding the Congress on Racial Equality (CORE). Members of this group were pacifists who had been deeply influenced by Henry David Thoreau and his theories on how to use nonviolent resistance to achieve social change. The group was also inspired by the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi and the nonviolent civil disobedience campaign that he used successfully against British rule in India. The three founders of CORE became convinced that the same methods could be employed by African-Americans to obtain civil rights in America.

Upon leaving prison, Rustin immediately joined with George Houser in planning a campaign against segregated transportation. In early 1947, CORE announced plans to send eight white and eight black men into the Deep South to test the Supreme Court ruling that declared segregation in interstate travel unconstitutional. The Journey of Reconciliation, as it became known, was to be a two week pilgrimage through Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee and Kentucky.

Members of the Journey of Reconciliation team were arrested several times, and on more than one occasion severely beaten. In North Carolina, Bayard Rustin was found guilty of violating the state's Jim Crow bus statute and was sentenced to thirty days on a chain gang.

After the arrest of Rosa Parks for refusing to give up her seat to a white man, a young Montgomery pastor at a Baptist Church, Martin Luther King, decided to organize a protest against bus segregation. African-Americans in Montgomery would refuse to use the city buses until passengers were completely integrated. Rustin was asked to go to Montgomery to help organize this campaign.

Martin Luther King was arrested and his house was fire bombed. Others involved in the Montgomery Bus Boycott also suffered from harassment and intimidation, but the protest continued. For thirteen months the 17,000 black people in Montgomery walked to work or obtained lifts from the small car-owning black population of the city. Eventually, the loss of revenue and a decision by the Supreme Court forced the Montgomery Bus Company to accept integration and the boycott ended, victorious.

Rustin was now King's main adviser, and he helped King formed the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). The new organization was committed to using nonviolence in the struggle for civil rights.

In 1963 Rustin began organizing what became known as the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. The decision to appoint Rustin as chief organizer was controversial. Roy Wilkins of the NAACP was against the appointment. Wilkins argued that being a former member of the American Communist Party made Rustin an easy target for the right-wing press. Wilkins also feared that the fact that Rustin had been imprisoned several times for both refusing to fight in the armed forces and for acts of homosexuality would be used against him in the days leading up to the march. However, Randolph insisted that Rustin was the best person for the job, and agreed to be the Director of the March only if Rustin would be his Deputy Director.

Wilkins was right to be concerned about a possible smear campaign against Rustin. Segregationist Senator Strom Thurmond led the campaign, accusing Rustin of being a "communist, draft dodger and homosexual." Most newspapers condemned the idea of a mass march on Washington. An editorial in the *New York Herald Tribune* warned that: "If Negro leaders persist in their announced plans to march 100,000 strong on the capital they will be

jeopardizing their cause. The ugly part of this particular mass protest is its implication of unconstrained violence if Congress doesn't deliver."

The 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom was a great success, in no small part due to Rustin's organizing genius. Over a quarter of a million people, black and white, peacefully gathered to hear speakers that included Randolph, King, Wilkins, John Lewis of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee and United Autoworkers head Walter Reuther. King was the final speaker and made his famous 'I Have a Dream' speech.

In the two years that followed the 1963 March, Congress passed into law the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act.

An activist until his final days, Bayard Rustin took up the cause of gay rights in later years. He died in New York in 1987.

Questions:

1. Bayard Rustin has been called the "American Gandhi." Do you think this is an appropriate description?

2. A common misunderstanding of non-violence is that when you do not fight back in a physical way, you are doing nothing in the face of injustice. How would Rustin have responded to that misunderstanding?

3. Rustin said that he was looking for "a group of troublemakers" to confront racism and Jim Crow laws. Why do you think Rustin would call himself and fellow campaigners against racism and Jim Crow laws "troublemakers?" Do you agree with him that the power of the troublemaker was "to make things unworkable" for those who were engaged in injustice?

4. What were the goals of the 1963 March on Washington? How do you think it would have felt to participate in that march?

5. How did Strom Thurmond attempt to derail the march? Was Randolph right to insist upon Rustin organizing the march, even though he knew that Thurmond might attempt to smear Rustin and with him the march?

6. Rustin was an 'outsider' of American society in many different ways – he was African-American, he believed in non-violence, he was a socialist, and he was gay. Do you think that Rustin's status as an 'outsider' gave him more insight into injustice to others?

Bayard Rustin on *Non-Violence vs. Jim Crow*
(Available at http://explorepahistory.com/odocument.php?docId=1-4-183)

Rustin believed deeply in the power of nonviolence to bring about social change. In the following essay, Rustin tells how he used nonviolence to challenge segregation on a southern bus.

Recently I was planning to go from Louisville to Nashville by bus. I bought my ticket, boarded the bus, and, instead of going to the back, sat down in the second seat. The driver saw me, got up, and came toward me.

"Hey, you. You're supposed to sit in the back seat."

"Why?"

"Because that's the law. Niggers ride in back."

I said, "My friend, I believe that is an unjust law. If I were to sit in back I would be condoning injustice."

Angry, but not knowing what to do, he got out and went into the station. He soon came out again, got into his seat, and started off.

This routine was gone through at each stop, but each time nothing came of it. Finally the driver, in desperation, must have phoned ahead, for about thirteen miles north of Nashville I heard sirens approaching. The bus came to an abrupt stop, and a police car and two motorcycles drew up beside us with a flourish. Four policemen got into the bus, consulted shortly with the driver, and came to my seat.

"Get up, you –-nigger!"

"Why?" I asked.

"Get up, you black–-!"

"I believe that I have a right to sit here," I said quietly. "If I sit in the back of the bus I am depriving that child" – I pointed to a little white child of five or six – "of the knowledge that there is injustice here, which I believe it is his right to know. It is my sincere conviction that the power of love in the world is the greatest power existing. If you have a greater power, my friend, you may move me."

How much they understood of what I was trying to tell them I do not know. By this time they were impatient and angry. As I would not move, they began to beat me about the head and

shoulders, and I shortly found myself knocked to the floor. Then they dragged me out of the bus and continued to kick and beat me.

Knowing that if I tried to get up or protect myself in the first heat of their anger they would construe it as an attempt to resist and beat me down again, I forced myself to be still and wait for their kicks, one after another. Then I stood up, spreading out my arms parallel to the ground, and said, "There is no need to beat me. I am not resisting you."

At this three white men, obviously Southerners by their speech, got out of the bus and remonstrated with the police. Indeed, as one of the policemen raised his club to strike me, one of them, a little fellow, caught hold of it and said, "Don't you do that!" A second policeman raised his club to strike the little man, and I stepped between them, facing the man, and said, "Thank you, but there is no need to do that. I do not wish to fight. I am protected well."

An elderly gentleman, well dressed and also a Southerner, asked the police where they were taking me.

They said, "Nashville."

"Don't worry, son," he said to me. "I'll be there to see that you get justice."

I was put into the back seat of the police car, between two policemen. Two others sat in front. During the thirteen-mile ride to town they called me every conceivable name and said anything they could think of to incite me to violence. I found that I was shaking with nervous strain, and to give myself something to do, I took out a piece of paper and a pencil, and began to write from memory a chapter from one of Paul's letters.

When I had written a few sentences, the man on my right said, "What're you writing?" and snatched the paper from my hand. He read it, then crumpled it into a ball and pushed it in my face. The man on the other side gave me a kick.

A moment later I happened to catch the eye of the young policeman in the front seat. He looked away quickly, and I took renewed courage from the realization that he could not meet my eyes because he was aware of the injustice being done. I began to write again, and after a moment I leaned forward and touched him on the shoulder. "My friend," I said, "how do you spell 'difference'?"

He spelled it for me – incorrectly – and I wrote it correctly and went on.

When we reached Nashville, a number of policemen were lined up on both sides of the hallway down which I had to pass on my way to the captain's office. They tossed me from one to another like a volleyball. By the time I reached the office, the lining of my best coat was torn,

and I was considerably rumpled. I straightened myself as best I could and went in. They had my bag, and went through it and my papers, finding much of interest, especially in the magazines *Christian Century* and *Fellowship*.

Finally the captain said, "Come here, nigger."

I walked directly to him. "What can I do for you?" I asked.

"Nigger," he said menacingly, "you're supposed to be scared when you come in here!"

"I am fortified by truth, justice, and Christ," I said. "There's no need for me to fear."

He was flabbergasted and, for a time, completely at a loss for words. Finally he said to another officer, "I believe the nigger's crazy!"

They sent me into another room and went into consultation. The wait was long, but after an hour and a half they came for me and I was taken for another ride, across town. At the courthouse, I was taken down the hall to the office of the assistant district attorney, Mr. Ben West. As I got to the door I heard a voice, "Say, you colored fellow, hey!" I looked around and saw the elderly gentleman who had been on the bus.

"I'm here to see that you get justice," he said.

The assistant district attorney questioned me about my life, the *Christian Century*, pacifism, and the war for half an hour. Then he asked the police to tell their side of what had happened. They did, stretching the truth a good deal in spots and including several lies for seasoning. Mr. West then asked me to tell my side.

"Gladly,' I said, "and I want you," turning to the young policeman who had sat in the front seat, "to follow what I say and stop me if I deviate from the truth in the least."

Holding his eyes with mine, I told the story exactly as it had happened, stopping often to say, "Is that right?" or "Isn't that what happened?" to the young policeman. During the whole time he never once interrupted me, and when I was through I said, "Did I tell the truth just as it happened?" and he said, "Well …"

Then Mr. West dismissed me, and I was sent to wait alone in a dark room. After an hour, Mr. West came in and said, very kindly, "You may go, Mister Rustin."

I left the courthouse, believing all the more strongly in the nonviolent approach. I am certain that I was addressed as "Mister" (as no Negro is ever addressed in the South), that I was assisted by those three men, and that the elderly gentleman interested himself in my

predicament because I had, without fear, faced the four policemen and said, “There is no need to beat me. I offer you no resistance.”

Questions:

1. Where did the bus driver expect Bayard Rustin to sit? What motivated Rustin to defy the law?

2. How did Rustin respond to the driver and to the police?

3. What does this story reveal about Rustin’s character? What does it show about the philosophy of nonviolence?

4. Can you imagine responding to a beating as Rustin did, without fighting back? What do you think this would feel like? How might it affect your opponent?

5. Do you agree that it takes more courage to engage in non-violent resistance, as Rustin did, than to physically fight back?