



I Must Resist: Bayard Rustin's Life in Letters

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BAYARD RUSTIN POSTHUMOUSLY AWARDED THE 2013 PRESIDENTIAL MEDAL OF FREEDOM

Published on the centennial of his birth, and in anticipation of the 50th anniversary of the historic March on Washington, here is Bayard Rustin's life story told in his own words.

Bayard Rustin has been called the “lost prophet” of the civil rights movement. A master strategist and tireless activist, he is best remembered as the organizer of the 1963 March on Washington, one of the largest nonviolent protests ever held in the U.S. He brought Gandhi's protest techniques to the American civil rights movement and played a deeply influential role in the life of Martin Luther King, Jr., helping to mold him into an international symbol of nonviolence.

Despite these achievements, Rustin often remained in the background. He was silenced, threatened, arrested, beaten, imprisoned and fired from important leadership positions, largely because he was an openly gay man in a fiercely homophobic era.

Here we have Rustin in his own words in a collection of over 150 of his letters; his correspondents include the major progressives of his day — for example, Eleanor Holmes Norton, A. Philip Randolph, Roy Wilkins, Ella Baker, and of course, Martin Luther King, Jr.

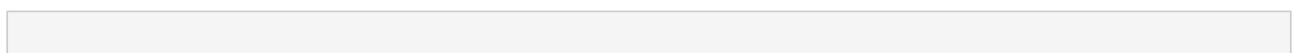
Bayard Rustin's eloquent, impassioned voice, his ability to chart the path “from protest to politics,” is both timely and deeply informative. As the Occupy movement ushers America into a pivotal election year, and as politicians and citizens re-assess their goals and strategies, these letters provide direct access to the strategic thinking and tactical planning that led to the successes of one of America's most transformative and historic social movements.

Praise for *I Must Resist*:

"A vital addition to the history of the civil rights movement by an exceptionally determined, vital and creative force who was invaluable to Martin Luther King Jr and A. Philip Randolph among many others."—Nat Hentoff

"The first entry in that wonderful collection of letters is a missive to a Quaker group that Rustin penned in 1942. Rustin's grandmother was a Quaker, and the letter, titled 'War is Wrong' in Long's anthology, places Rustin firmly in the long tradition of American pacifism."—Hector Tobar, *Los Angeles Times*

"Despite the fact that Rustin was pivotal to the civil rights movement, including organizing the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, he is not nearly as well known as others in the movement. This collection of Rustin's letters aims to set straight the record on his enormous influence."—*Booklist*



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