

# Bayard Rustin

*The Labor Strategist Behind the Civil Rights Movement*

*"We need in every community a group of angelic troublemakers." -- Bayard Rustin*

## Why Rustin Belongs on a Labor Education Platform

Bayard Rustin was a labor organizer first. He came up under A. Philip Randolph -- founder of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters -- and served as first executive director of the AFL-CIO-backed A. Philip Randolph Institute. The 1963 March on Washington's full name was 'the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom' -- a labor demand for living wages and an end to workplace discrimination. In 1968, Rustin and Randolph helped persuade Dr. King to come to Memphis to stand with sanitation workers chanting 'I AM A MAN.' For Rustin, labor justice and civil rights were always the same beam of light from two angles.

### THE MEMPHIS HOOK

Memphis is where Rustin's life work culminated. The 1968 sanitation strike -- a labor action -- became the moral pivot of the entire civil rights movement. Every conversation about Memphis and labor must include Bayard Rustin.

## Curriculum Roadmap -- Five Module Plan

### MODULE 1 (READY)

#### 'I AM A MAN': Rustin, Memphis 1968, and the Labor-Civil Rights Bridge

Full teacher-ready module: objectives, primary sources, discussion guide, activity, assessment, extensions. Available now.

### MODULE 2 (TO CO-DEVELOP)

#### What Is an 'Angelic Troublemaker'?

Defining moral courage in protest. Co-build with The Rustin Institute.

### MODULE 3 (TO CO-DEVELOP)

#### The March on Washington Was a JOBS March

Recovering the full name, the labor demands, and Rustin's logistics genius.

### MODULE 4 (TO CO-DEVELOP)

#### A. Philip Randolph and the Brotherhood

The Black labor leader who mentored Rustin and built the bridge.

### MODULE 5 (TO CO-DEVELOP)

#### Why Was Rustin Written Out of History?

Recovering Rustin's queerness as itself an act of justice.

## OPEN TO PARTNERSHIP

### Module 1 ready now. Modules 2-5 to co-develop with educators.

We are actively seeking partnership with The Rustin Institute (formerly the LGBTQ+ Institute at the National Center for Civil and Human Rights -- now an independent nonprofit rooted in the U.S. South), the Bayard Rustin Center for Social Justice, and the A. Philip Randolph Institute to co-create the remaining four modules.

**Contact:** [bradshawsolutions@gmail.com](mailto:bradshawsolutions@gmail.com) | [laboreducation.org/bayard-rustin](http://laboreducation.org/bayard-rustin)

*"We are all one -- and if we don't know it, we will learn it the hard way." -- Bayard Rustin*  
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