

Troublemaker for Justice: The Story of Bayard Rustin, the Man Behind the March on Washington

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Bayard Rustin was an important leader in the civil rights movement, but his accomplishments are at times forgotten. Jacqueline Houtman, Michael Long, and Walter Naegle, Rustin's widowed partner, work to correct that with *Troublemaker for Justice*, a young reader version of Rustin's story.

Following Rustin from his childhood in Pennsylvania, the book discusses his belief in nonviolence even before Martin Luther King, Jr. advocated it, his early years as a member of the Young Communist League, and his arrests for various protests and for being gay at a time when many states treated LGBTQ orientation as a crime. Years before Rosa Parks's arrest, he was arrested for sitting in the white sections of a bus and a movie theater. He joined the Freedom Riders and played a key role in organizing the March on Washington. Rustin's work and relationships with legends like A. Philip Randolph, Martin Luther King, Jr., and John Lewis are also explored.

Packed full of sidebars with additional context—including regarding the Quakers' views of civil rights, the nonviolent philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi, and Jim Crow laws—the book also lists additional resources, includes a timeline of Rustin's life, and forwards discussion questions.

Rustin's biggest accomplishments are touched on, but the space is brief and can't encompass everything, including his efforts to desegregate New York schools in the 1960s or his help for Soviet Jews in the 1980s. There is limited discussion about those in the civil rights movement who tried to sideline Rustin because he was gay or because of his past communist associations. While it is not comprehensive, *Troublemaker for Justice* is an helpful primer for young readers about a civil rights leader who's worth learning more about.

JEFF FLEISCHER (July/August 2019)

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