

Stations Activity **Freedom 'Riters** *Mr > Bolos*

STATION: CORE letter to President

1. Did the White House ever receive this letter or send a reply? How do you know?
2. What are "Gandhian principles"?
3. What references do you see to any ultimate causes of the Civil Rights Movement?
4. Who was Robert E. Lee and why do you think James Farmer quotes him?

STATION: Envelope addressed to J. Dolan

1. Who is the sender and who is the recipient of the letter? What is the probable relationship between the two men?
2. What would you guess are the jobs and/or status of each person? What is your evidence?
3. What is the date of the letter? (HINT: look at the postmark)

STATION: **Gallup Poll, May 1961**

1. What is a Gallup Poll and how reliable is it?
2. What were the results of the poll?
3. Did the results surprise you? Why or why not?

STATION: **Arrest Report & Jail Verdict Slip**

1. Who is John Luther Dolan? Make your best guess based on his demographic information.
2. When was John Dolan arrested? How does this fit into the timeline of the letter?
3. What was John Dolan's crime? Explain.
4. Where was John Dolan finally arrested and sentenced? How does this relate to *Eyes on the Prize: Ain't Scared of Your Jails*?
5. What was John Dolan's punishment (include start & stop dates)? Do you think this was a fair consequence for his action? Why or why not?

STATION: **CORE-LATOR (STL)**

1. What exactly was the “CORE-LATOR”? Make your best guess.
2. How reliable is this medium? Explain.
3. What are the specific techniques and/or goals of the “Freedom Walk”?
4. Why do you think this “new” tactic was developed, especially given CORE’s association with the Freedom Rides?

STATION: **CORE-LATOR (NOLA)**

1. Where was John Dolan arrested in contrast to the members of the New Orleans CORE?
2. What were the arrest charges against John Dolan, George Blevins, and Frank Nelson? To what degree do you believe the three men were charged with a legitimate crime? Explain.
3. According to *CORE-LATOR*, how did the NOLA police treat the three CORE men? What did they accuse the CORE members of to provoke their reaction? Be specific.
4. Why did Dolan, Blevins, and Nelson submit affidavits to the **U.S.** Attorney General?

POST-READING (HW): **Letter to John L. Dolan**

1. How does the tone of the letter's greeting convey the father's emotions?
2. Why do you think the father says that he hopes his son's "sanity will return"?
3. What "group" does he mention? How does the father feel about the "publicity"? How do you know?
4. What does "studiously polite" mean? How does the father interpret this?
5. What do the father and son have in common? How do you know?
6. Who is Bob Hanson? What's your best guess?
7. What is the father's greatest fear for his son's future?

8. What do you think the father wants, using "every system [he] could think of"?

9. What does "*bon voyage*" actually mean and why does the father **not** use it as a closing?

10. How does the tone of the letter's closing convey the father's emotions?

Response to John Dolan’s father

Type a one-page (minimum) response to John Luther Dolan’s father as if you were that Freedom Rider. Make sure you date your letter, “January 2nd, 1962”, the day his jail sentence ended.

REQUIREMENTS:

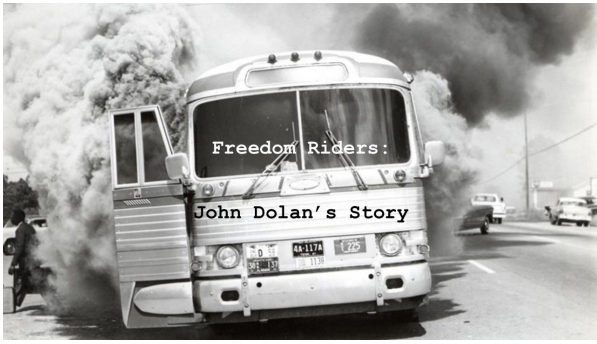
1. An appropriate greeting (opening or salutation): for example, “Dear, Dad”
2. An appropriate closing: for example, “Love, John” or “Your Son”
3. References to his jail sentence in Mississippi (more than his arrest in NOLA)
4. References to **specifics** in his father’s letter (eg., address the father’s claims), partly because his reply to his father’s letter would be months later and the father would not necessarily recall everything he wrote, originally.
5. A clear tone based on your interpretation of his life after prison. Is he bitter? Inspired?

HINTS:

Specific details make for a more vivid and effective kind of communication. You may take liberties regarding your characterization of Dolan’s prison term for this assignment. Finally, consider you and your peer’s contributions to the “disappointments” survey in order to inform your letter back to John’s father.

RUBRIC:

CRITERION	STRONG	OK	NEEDS WORK
Greeting + Closing / Consistent Tone throughout response?			
References to his father’s letter? Claims refuted or confirmed?			
Description of prison sentence in Mississippi?			



ARREST REPORT
HINDS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

6/26/61
MO. DAY YEAR

Dolan (Last Name) John (First Name) Luther (Middle Initial)

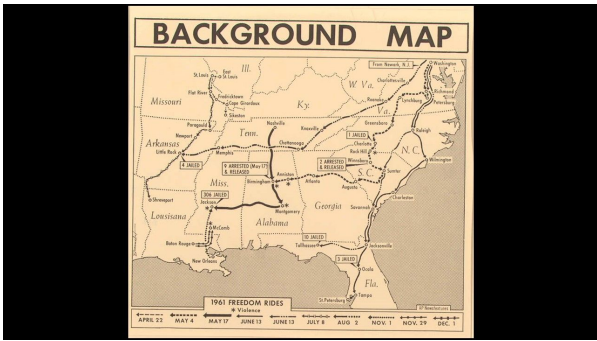
2140 Oxford Street, Berkley, Calif. 20 W M
Age Race Sex

BREACH OF THE PEACE (Charge) James L. Spencer (Judge)

ARRESTING OFFICERS: Captain J. L. Ray

REMARKS: \$200.00 Fine and 4 Months in Jail

(To be released January 1, 1962)



HINDS COUNTY JAIL
JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

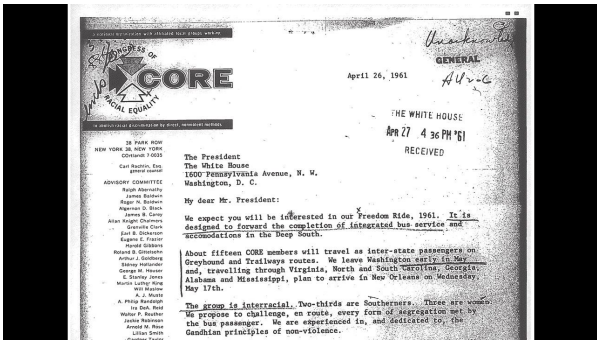
John Luther Dolan, James Spencer
By order of Judge
for the crime of Breach of the Peace

Your sentence has been set at \$200.00 and 4 months
You will be released from Jail: Month: Jan Day: 3 Year: 1962

J. R. GILFOY
Sheriff of Hinds County

By Jim Kelly
Deputy Sheriff

N.M.



CORE-LATOR
10/61

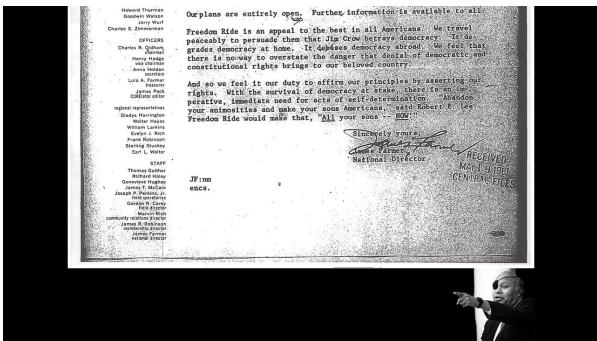
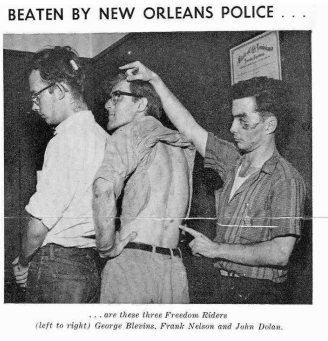
FREEDOM WALK

A new technique for protesting against discrimination has been used successfully by four CORE groups: St. Louis, St. Louis County, East St. Louis and Alton.

They organized a 30-mile Freedom Walk on August 28 from Alton, Illinois into St. Louis. Over 100 persons participated including teachers, ministers and students. Proceeding the walkers was a 4-man interracial team which tested restaurants. Those where Negroes were barred will be visited by CORE negotiators with action to follow if equal service is not forthcoming.

Four large placards carried by the walkers said "Freedom Walk... Alton to St. Louis," "End Racial Discrimination," "Liberty and Justice for All" and "Discrimination Retards Democracy." Leaflets distributed along the way explained: "The purpose of the walk is to protest racial discrimination which exists along our route. We ask that people try to overcome their hatreds so that all men can live together in a new world of brotherhood and freedom."

Not all the persons encountered along the route heeded this advice. The most extreme hostility was expressed by crowds in the business district of Granite City. "You could hear curses almost all the time—"



...but you could hear them," reported one of the walkers. Several of the walkers were spat upon, kicked or shoved off the sidewalk. The walkers adhered to a discipline of nonviolence.

At Wood River a group of teenagers tried to block the walk but were dispersed by police. On the way through Hartford and Madison, police averted incidents involving drunks who emerged from taverns at the walkers passed.

As the walkers neared St. Louis, hostility declined. Loud applause and cheers greeted them as they passed through Inokuby, the Negro section of East St. Louis. The group reached the public library in St. Louis at 8:10 p.m., 1 1/2 hours after their departure from Alton. Although they were tired, they sang some freedom songs before dispersing. As Dr. Alfred Kussell, one of the coordinators, told the press: "We felt we had done something of importance."

Despite a downpour of rain, 30 members of Baltimore CORE turned out to picket Gov'n Oak Amusement Park September 2. It was the seventh annual protest against the Park's "All Nations Day" in which Negroes are refused admittance.

In protest 15 members of New Orleans CORE picketed the police station. They were arrested. The group also conducted a sit-in inside the police station. Blotius, Nelson and Dolan were arrested at the home of Patricia Smith, where they had been invited for dinner. Police entered the home—without a warrant—and started taking the three whites where they were from, why they were in New Orleans, what they were doing in a Negro neighborhood, etc.

Finally, the three were placed under arrest, taken to the second precinct and booked for vagrancy. From there, they were transported to jail in a police wagon. As the wagon approached the jail, another prisoner who had baited the Freedom Riders along the way, got up and started swinging his fists at them. When he heard police start to unlock the door, he yelled for help.

"What followed was something of a surprise to me," wrote Blotius in an affidavit submitted to the U.S. Attorney General (Nelson and Dolan also submitted affidavits). "The first thing I noticed was a policeman's fist coming toward me. The blow caught me on the side of the head before it occurred to me to duck. I was kicked and knocked to the back of the wagon and shoved out. I saw a uniformed policeman holding Nelson by his shirt collar, beating him over the head with a blackjack and yelling: Look out, he's trying to escape." Since Frank was on his knees, it seemed funny to me that anyone could think he was trying to escape.

"Someone behind me yelled: 'Get up against the wall,' so I did. Another policeman shouted that someone had tried to take his gun. As I stood with my hands against the wall, a policeman struck me repeatedly over the head and shoulders with a blackjack. This continued for perhaps a minute. Then they moved the three of us inside the building and placed us in a cell."

The affidavit concludes: "At no time during the entire proceedings did I strike anyone or attempt any sort of action which would be contrary to the principles of nonviolence I had accepted upon joining CORE. Nor did I see Frank Nelson or John Dolan respond with violence at any time."

Gallup Poll (AIPO) [May, 1961]

"Do you approve or disapprove of what the 'Freedom Riders' are doing?"

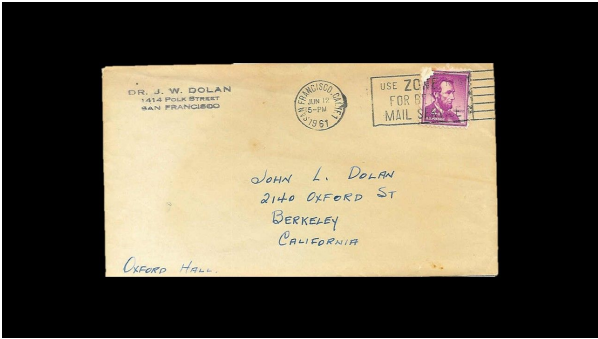
22% Approve
61% Disapprove
18% No opinion

Postmarked: 6/19/61

It is some 120 miles, but I have been unable to help, as will shed the burden by writing you.

When my return home this evening I found your note, together with your dreams and other stories. I will put yours things in the front room and take good care of them for you with the hope that someday your sanity will return.

Your group has received excellent publicity in all Bay Area newspapers, so any attempt to keep this episode quiet is utterly impossible. The men in the band were all studiously polite to me today, but I learned that nearly all of them had read the account in one paper or another.



It seems incredible that a man with a brilliant mind and all the opportunities that you have had should choose to pursue such a radical course. One of the men in the band who is a student at Cal told Bob Hansen that you had the reputation of being "a crazy mixed-up kid." I wonder if psychiatric help would be of any value, and I write this in all seriousness. I wish you would give the matter serious thought.

If I had any religious convictions I could pray, but without faith of any kind in the supernatural I can only hope, and it doesn't seem that hope is of any great value.



In the years ahead your determination will pose a severe handicap in many fields, particularly in any government positions and also in teaching if you decide to make that your career.

In the past three years I have tried every system that I could think of. Arguments, threats, cajolery, humor and bribery with no effect whatsoever. Presumably as a parent I have been a miserable failure.

When you first advised me of your decision, characteristically blew my top, and was quite bitter. This feeling is now modified into one of

CORE letter to White House:	April 26, 1961
Gallup Poll:	May, 1961
Freedom Ride to Jackson, Mississippi:	May to June? 1961
Letter to John Dolan:	June 12, 1961
Arrest of John Dolan:	June 26, 1961
Scheduled Release from Prison:	January 2, 1962

