

**Join the Student Sit-Ins**

**Act Four Transcript**

**Video online at: <http://americanhistory.si.edu/freedomandjustice/A4.asx>**

***Codes:***

A = Actor (Samuel P. Leonard)

P = Participant

“ “ =interrupting, pause

[ ] = not speaker's words

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A = Now, does anyone still have one of my menus, anybody still have one? Please don't walk off with my menus. 1, 2, 3. All right, listen, if you have a menu in your hand right now can you come up here and bring it to me please. Come on come on up here and bring it to me. All right, all right, miss can you have a seat right here in this chair. All right, miss can you have a seat right here in this chair we will put you right in the middle. And sir can you have a seat right here in this chair. All right, there you are and today you three are going to take the role of protesters at a sit-in. Now don't be nervous, I'm not going to give you a microphone, I'm not going to put a funny costume on you. Matter of fact, what do we do at a sit in?

P = Sit.

A = Sit, that's all you have today. So you three have the easy job today. But the rest of us have a tougher job. We are going to give them a taste of what to expect at a real sit-in. Now before we do that the rules are simple and this is very serious, protesters, there is to be no physical retaliation, no verbal response, no nonverbal reaction to any kind of attack. Now everyone remember to dress in your Sunday best, although men should actually wear clip-on ties rather than these regular ones, all right, and women should not wear pierced earrings or high heels. Do not bring anything with you that can in

anyway be seen as a weapon not even a pocketful of change. Stay together, never leave or arrive by yourself. We are always much stronger as a group. That's what's going to get us through any situation. All right, what I want you three to do today is to really think about these things. Think about how it's going to feel when you first sit down and you are surrounded by people who hate you. And while you imagine that I'm going to give everybody else some instructions. Please do not touch any of our three protesters today. It's very important, keep your hands to yourself at all times. Also do not talk to them today even if there is somebody up here who you know don't say a word. The only thing we are going to do today is look at them and that means you can stand either here beside them and look at them or behind them and look at them, about how close I am. But do not touch any of our three protesters. All right does everybody understand that?

P = Yes.

A = Yes. All right now we all have to do this together for it to work. So everybody stand up. Step forward, come on in and fill in the space. All right, yep come on, come on in everyone. Yes that's perfect. That's excellent. Now protesters, as that mob is closing in around on you. How will you feel? Are you determined to be free? Can you control your fear and your emotions? Now I want you to imagine, all right, just imagine feeling all these angry stares on the back of your neck. Imagine hearing the people say, [what do they think they are doing here]? And then I also want you to imagine the Negro women in the kitchen whom you thought would be on your side, they're saying [you're making the race look bad]. Now the crowd starts to yell at you and call you the worst kind of names and now they begin to touch you, pushing and poking, and spitting, and then a milkshake gets poured on your head, they might start attacking at any moment. What will you do? Can you stay strong? Can you stay focused? Can you stay nonviolent? All right, can we back away, let's give them some space and let's give them a hand for participating today.