**Choosing to Participate:  
“Individuals make choices and choices make history.”**

* Develop an understanding of the roles of [**Bystanders, Upstanders, Victims, Perpetrators**](https://www.facinghistory.org/sites/default/files/Range_Human_Behavior_Vocabulary.pdf) with this linked activity from Facing History
* How can the individuals’ responses to the dilemmas they face in a society characterized by sharp divisions around race, class, age, and gender help us think about our choices in the face of similar dilemmas in our own lives?
* What models of moral and ethical behavior do the individuals offer to us that we might adopt, modify, or reject in our own lives?

**Choosing to Participate:  
Essential Question: *What choices do individuals and institutions have in the face of an unjust society?***

* Chattanooga; What does Ed Johnson’s trial and lynching reveal about the setting, or moral universe, in which they took place?
* Consider the ***range of choices*** ordinary citizens confronted; **to enable, to resist,** or **to willingly participate**.
* Consider the range of human behavior; **conform**, **consent** or **resist** societal pressures to do good or bad.

**Resources for “range of choices” discussion**[[1]](#footnote-1)

<https://www.facinghistory.org/holocaust-and-human-behavior/chapter-10/moral-luck-and-dilemmas-judgment>

A 2013 *BBC Magazine* article asks, “Should we judge people of past eras for moral failings?” It continues:

Assessing attitudes and behaviour in the past presents us with a puzzle. What we might regard as offensive today—sexist, or racist, or homophobic for example—might have once been orthodoxy [accepted as normal].

A moral relativist would say that our values today can't be compared with the values from another era. What was right for them was right for them. What is right for us is right for us.

The philosopher Miranda Fricker is not a moral relativist, but she thinks the test for blameworthiness is whether the person could have known any different. “The proper standards by which to judge people are the best standards that were available to them at the time.” It's unfair to blame people for failing to be moral pioneers, she says. “The attitude of blame presupposes that the person was in a position to have done better.”

**But if we can't blame people for abhorrent views, does that also mean we can't hold them responsible for these views?**

**Choosing to Participate Essential Question: *Could any individual have made a difference in the outcome of this case and the murder of Ed Johnson? How?***

Students first consider the individuals they researched, then break up into groups to discuss individuals and to prepare a discussion of their choices in class [Jigsaw](https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/teaching-strategies/jigsaw-developing-community-and-disseminating-knowledge) discussion.

[**Biographies of some of the key Figures in the Shipp Case**](Biographies%20of%20Key%20Figures%20in%20the%20Shipp%20Case) <https://www.famous-trials.com/sheriffshipp/1110-biographies>

**Choosing to participate today:**

*Who could you name at each level as an Upstander?*

* Local
* Regional
* National
* World

Kohlberg's proposed stages of moral development:

LEVEL ONE: We make decisions based on how the consequences will affect us personally.

STAGE 1: We obey authority figures in order to avoid punishment.

STAGE 2: We trade or cooperate with others in order to get what we want or need. “You scratch my back, and I’ll scratch yours.”

LEVEL TWO: We strive to meet the expectations of our peers, families, and/or nation.

STAGE 3: We are “good” by doing what is approved by others. Approval can come from individuals or the expectations of peers, groups, or society. Meaning well counts, even if the outcome isn’t what we intended.

STAGE 4: We are “good” by following the law and obeying authority. We do our duty and avoid challenging the social order.

LEVEL THREE: We strive to live up to “higher” laws of morality and ethics even when they conflict with the law, authority, and social order.

STAGE 5: We look beyond laws and decisions by authority members to the rights and principles that our society is based on (i.e., “All men are created equal” is a principle we might try to live by even if it is contradicted by a particular set of laws or customs).

STAGE 6: We strive to live according to our own consciences and universal principles of justice and human dignity. [[2]](#footnote-2)

**Justice? How do we define it?**

* **Social justice** is the notion that everyone deserves equal economic, political, and social opportunities irrespective of race, gender, or religion.
* **Restorative or corrective justice** seeks to make whole those who have suffered unfairly.
* **Retributive justice** seeks to punish wrongdoers objectively and proportionately.
* And **procedural justice** refers to implementing legal decisions in accordance with fair and unbiased processes.[[3]](#footnote-3)
* <http://ethicsunwrapped.utexas.edu/glossary/justice>

**Choosing to Participate:**

**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS on Social Justice**

* ***Do laws or the hearts and minds of individuals play a greater role in creating a just society?* Review students’ perspectives at this point in the unit.**
* ***What is equality? What forms of equality are necessary for a just, democratic society?*** [[4]](#footnote-4)

**“We will have to repent in this generation not merely for the hateful words and actions of the bad people, but for the appalling silence of the good people.” Martin Luther King *Letter from Birmingham Jail, Alabama, 16 April 1963***

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**“The way to right wrongs is to turn the light of truth upon them.”  Ida B. Wells-Barnett**

Activity: View video **“The Trouble I Have Seen”[[5]](#footnote-5)**

This film raises profound questions about the persistent effects of racial violence and injustice. It explores the powerful effects of both trying to forget or ignore past injustices and attempting to remember them and establish them as part of a community’s shared history.

***“As you watch, consider what it means for a society to repair itself following a tragic event.”***

<https://youtu.be/XaCax-yvCn4> “The Trouble I Have Seen”

“There are a variety of ways in which communities, states, and nations have sought justice and healing after episodes of injustice and violence. These approaches seek a type of justice often called *restorative justice*. Sometimes restorative justice methods are employed in a matter of years after the event, but more often they are put into place decades later.”

**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS on Restorative Justice:**  
***“How can a community seek justice and healing after an act of injustice and violence?”   
“What are the responsibilities of citizens in a democracy?”*** [[6]](#footnote-6)

Activity

* Use the Gallery Walk teaching strategy with Handouts 6.1 to 6.6 in the *Teaching Mockingbird* guide to introduce five methods of restorative justice: truth and reconciliation commissions, pardons, apologies, reparations, and memorials. ([Signing up on their site is required for the free download of PDF of the text for the handouts)](https://www.facinghistory.org/mockingbird)
* Follows the gallery walk with a class discussion on healing and justice, asking students to share their thoughts on which of these approaches, or combination of approaches, would be appropriate for Chattanooga to take today
* *Teaching Strategy:* [*Gallery Walk*](https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/teaching-strategies/gallery-walk) *link*

1. * From Facing History and Ourselves’ *Democracy at Risk: Holocaust and Human Behavior Guide.*

   [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. From *Facing History and Ourselves Democracy at Risk: Holocaust and Human Behavior* [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. *Facing History and Ourselves Democracy at Risk: The Holocaust and Human Behavior.* [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. *Facing History and Ourselves The Reconstruction Era and*

   *the Fragility of Democracy* [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. From Facing History and Ourselves Teaching Mockingbird, (Unit 5) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. *Facing History Teaching Mockingbird Guide, Unit 5* [↑](#footnote-ref-6)