

Exercise 1

Key Question: What does justice mean in terms of histories of racism in the US?

As a class or in small groups, students should come up with brief definitions of “justice”. They should then be encouraged to think about what justice means in relation to various aspects of US history, including slavery, segregation, etc.

Definitions should be shared and points of commonality and difference in the definitions should be considered.

Some discussion questions and/or prompts:

- What kinds of justice, if any, were offered for slavery? What kinds of justice were actually received?
- What kinds of justice, if any, were offered for Jim Crow segregation? What kinds of justice were actually received?
- What kinds of justice, if any, were offered for lynching and other acts of brutality? What kinds of justice were actually received?
- How does the criminal justice system relate to issues of justice, including slavery, segregation, lynching and other acts of violence?
- If little justice has been offered and/or received, what might that indicate about the criminal justice system in America?
 - What might that indicate about histories of black protest in America?