The Mississippi Department of Archives and History established the Mississippi History on Loan video program to enhance classroom instruction on Mississippi history, literature, art, personalities, and places. The program has over 200 titles available year-round for grades 4-12. The videos are offered in VHS and DVD format.

Mississippi History on Loan presents *Ghosts of Mississippi.* In 1963, civil rights leader Medgar Evers was murdered in his driveway. His wife, Myrlie Evers worked towards convicting Byron De La Beckwith, the white supremacist who murdered her husband. After 30 years, Evers’ killer was finally convicted. Note: Explicit language, please preview. The online activities are adaptable for grades 8-12.

The lesson plan includes the following:

- Common Core and Social Studies Frameworks
- Who is Medgar Evers?
- Film Review
- Timeline of Events
- The Arrest of Beckwith
- Forensic Evidence in the Courtroom
- Delayed Justice
- Vocabulary
- Teacher Evaluation

For more information please contact:

MDAH Museum Division  P.O. Box 571 Jackson, MS  39205
MDAH works to ensure our lessons and activities work with and complement the updated Mississippi Department of Education frameworks, competencies, and objectives. Each lesson and activity has been matched to the grade levels, subjects, competencies, and objectives.

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Directions: Read “Medgar Evers and the Origin of the Civil Rights Movement in Mississippi” by Dernoral Davis accessible from Mississippi History Now at http://mshistorynow.mdah.state.ms.us/articles/53/medgar-evers-and-the-origin-of-the-civil-rights-movement-in-mississippi Then answer the following questions about Medgar Evers.

1. When and where was Evers born? __________________________________________________________

2. What did Evers witness at the age of 14 and how did it impact him? _________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________________________________

3. After returning from service during World War II, what did Evers and other veterans attempt to do? _______
   _________________________________________________________________________________________

4. What organization did Evers become involved with during his senior year in college? _________________

5. What did Evers attempt to integrate in 1954 and what problems did he face? __________________________
   _________________________________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________________________________

6. What did he do as NAACP field secretary? ____________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________________________________
7. Evers was determined to remain in Mississippi and work towards equality between races, despite numerous threats against his life. Would you have done the same? Why or why not? __________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________

8. How does Medgar Evers’ dedication and sacrifice for civil rights impact your life? __________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________
1. July 2, 1925 in Decatur, Mississippi

2. The dragging and hanging of an African American family friend who was accused of insulting a white woman. Evers then passed his bloody clothes in a field everyday on his way to school, an image he carried with him throughout his life as a reminder of the racial discrimination against African Americans.

3. Vote

4. NAACP

5. University of Mississippi in Oxford. His application for enrollment was rejected on a “technicality” (his letters of reference were not from residents within his county).

6. He investigated racial murders and cases of maltreatment; encouraged adult and youth chapters of the NAACP; organized protests and boycotts against white merchants.

7. Answers will vary.

8. Answers will vary.
Directions: Answer the following questions about the film.

1. One of the first people DeLaughter speaks to about Evers’ death is Fred Sanders who then
   a. walks him through the crime scene.
   b. gives Beckwith an alibi.
   c. refuses to talk to DeLaughter at all.
   d. confesses to the murder.

2. At Windsor Ruins, near Washington, Mississippi, DeLaughter meets Delmar Dennis who is
   a. a former police officer who worked on the Evers murder.
   b. a key witness to the murder.
   c. a former KKK informant for the FBI.
   d. all of the above.

3. Charles Evers refuses to come to the trial because
   a. he can’t get away from his radio station.
   b. he never liked his brother.
   c. he doesn’t want to be in the same room as his brother’s killer.
   d. he thinks it is too late to try to get justice.

4. James Holley testifies that shortly after Evers was shot he saw Beckwith
   a. at a restaurant in downtown Jackson.
   b. on the road to the Coast.
   c. on his front porch.
   d. at a gas station 90 miles away.

5. DeLaughter finds the murder weapon in a trunk at the home of
   a. Beckwith.
   b. Myrlie Evers.
   c. his father-in law.
   d. Thorn McIntyre.

6. The backlash experienced by DeLaughter and his family for re-opening the Evers case included
   a. a bomb threat.
   b. hate mail.
   c. crank calls.
   d. all of the above.
7. Myrlie Evers gives DeLaughter an important piece of evidence for the case in the form of
   a. a key witness.
   b. the original court transcript.
   c. her husband’s briefcase.
   d. a signed confession.

8. Jerry Mitchell is a
   a. political lobbyist attempting to stop the Evers case from going to trial.
   b. a lawyer for the defendant.
   c. a newspaper reporter covering the case.
   d. an Evers family member.

9. The jury of eight African Americans and four whites, with seven women and five men is different from the
   original jury of
   a. all white men.
   b. all white women.
   c. all African American men.
   d. white and African American men.

10. DeLaughter encounters resistance to re-opening the Evers case from
    a. the district attorney.
    b. his wife and parents.
    c. the public.
    d. all of the above.

11. At Beckwith’s first trial, former Mississippi Governor Ross Barnett
    a. offered his condolences to the Evers family.
    b. made a public statement of support for the Evers family.
    c. shook hands with Beckwith in the court room.
    d. paid for Beckwith’s attorney fees.

12. During Beckwith’s final trial, three witnesses said he had
    a. bragged about killing Evers.
    b. repeatedly denied killing Evers.
    c. never spoken about the case.
    d. expressed sadness at Evers’ death.
1. A
2. C
3. C
4. D
5. C
6. D
7. B
8. C
9. A
10. D
11. C
12. A
Mississippi History on Loan
GHOSTS OF MISSISSIPPI
Timeline of Events

Name __________________________________________ Date ________________

Directions: Put the events in the order in which they occur in the film.

_____ Myrlie Evers gives DeLaughter the original court transcripts.

_____ Medgar Evers is shot in the driveway of his home.

_____ One of DeLaughter’s sons gets in a fight over his Dad’s role in the Evers case.

_____ Beckwith goes free for the Evers murder after two mistrials are decreed.

_____ Delmar Dennis, Dan Prince, and Peggy Morgan testify that Beckwith bragged about murdering Evers.

_____ DeLaughter teams-up with Charlie Crisco and Benny Bennett to investigate the case.

_____ DeLaughter’s wife berates him for taking the Evers case.

_____ DeLaughter meets with a former policeman called to the scene of the crime.

_____ News of the murder weapon’s whereabouts cause some to suspect a government cover-up.

_____ Myrlie Evers testifies for the third time on behalf of her husband.

_____ Charles Evers declines to attend the trial of Beckwith.

_____ The DeLaughter family receives a bomb threat.

_____ With the original autopsy reports missing, the body of Medgar Evers is exhumed for re-examination.

_____ Former Mississippi Governor Ross Barnett wishes Beckwith well while on trial.

_____ The defense rests its case without calling Beckwith to the stand.

_____ Beckwith is found guilty for Medgar Evers murder.
Name ___________________________________________  Date ____________

Directions: Put the events in the order in which they occur in the film.

9 Myrlie Evers gives DeLaughter the original court transcripts.

1 Medgar Evers is shot in the driveway of his home.

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15 The defense rests its case without calling Beckwith to the stand.

16 Beckwith is found guilty for Medgar Evers murder.
Californian Is Charged
With Murder Of Evers
Suspect Transferred
To Jail In Jackson

By DUDLEY LEHUN
Associated Press Staff Writer
Byron de La Beckwith, a 61-
year-old salesman from the Mis-
sissippi Delta city of Greenwood
and a native Californian, was
charged with murder Sunday in
the ambush slaying of Negro lead-
er Medgar Evers.

The Federal Bureau of Investi-
gation took Beckwith into custody
at Greenwood late Saturday
night.

Beckwith’s attorney said he
would not even be heard in
the murder case because FBI
agents were watching his house.

A time and date for a court ap-
ppearance has not yet been set.

Dist. Attorney Bill Waller ex-
pressed concern at the news to
the Hinds County Grand Jury July 1.

The prisoner should ask for
a preliminary hearing.

Beckwith, a salesman for a
chemical fertilizer company, was
bought here by FBI agents dur-
ing the night and held in the
city jail.

BECKWITH ARRESTED

Beckwith said he would have
no comment about anything.

He said: “I prefer to have my counsel
present.”

CHARGED WITH MURDER

Beckwith was taken to Jef-
ferson County, Alabama, where
federal authorities arrested him.

The key clue in his acquittal
was a fingerprint lifted from a
bullet found near Evers’ home after
he was shot in the back June 12.

MORE EVIDENCE

At Washington, D.C., a GBI
agent said in a television
interview on NBC to
Prime Time that there was more evidence
against Beckwith that the
federal authorities had been made
public.

The attorney general, in maki-
ging his statement about other evi-
dence, said, “It is not a liberty to
contact the attorney general.”

The arrest capped 11 days of
intensive investigation by city,
county, state and federal agents.

FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover
announced in Washington that
Beckwith had been arrested as a
civil rights suspect that he “and
others unknown to us in combi-
nation, jerry, coerced, and intimidated Med-
gar Evers.”

The handcuffed Beckwith
appeared before Superior Com-
mmissioner John Counts.

Beckwith said he would have
no comment about anything.

He said: “I prefer to have my counsel
present.”
Directions: Use the Clarion Ledger article from June 24, 1963 to answer the following questions.

1. Who took Byron de la Beckwith into custody on Saturday, June 22, 1964? ____________________________

2. What charge was he arrested on? What charge did Jackson police later charge him with? ________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________

3. What was the “key clue to his seizure”? _______________________________________________________

4. What was the purpose of the federal charge? ___________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________

5. In the United States, the Attorney General is the head of the Department of Justice, the top law enforcement officer and lawyer for the government. Why do you think Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy would have taken an interest in the Medgar Evers murder? _________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________

6. When asked for comment on the arrest of Beckwith, Medgar Evers’ widow, Myrlie said “I would rather reserve further comment until I see what form of justice will take place.” In your opinion, does this indicate a lack of faith in the U.S. justice system? Explain your reasoning. ________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________

7. Does the article take a fair and equal view of Evers and Beckwith? Support your opinion with specific examples from the text. ________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
1. The FBI
2. Federal charge of violating the Civil Rights Act; murder.
3. A fingerprint on a rifle found near Evers’ home.
4. To keep Beckwith in custody until he could be delivered to Jackson police.
5. Answers will vary.
6. Answers will vary.
7. Answers will vary.
Introduction:
Although evidence of centuries old fingerprints exists, its study and classification did not begin until the 19th century. During this period three types of fingerprint patterns were identified, the arch, loop, and whorl. Fingerprints were first used to identify a criminal in 1892 and because every individual’s fingerprint is unique, fingerprinting has become the primary means of identification for law enforcement agencies throughout the world. In the film, a police officer who examined the murder weapon in 1963 testifies that fingerprints on the gunsight match those of the defendant, Byron De La Beckwith. Using the low-tech method below, attempt to create a fingerprint of your own and identify the fingerprints of a classmate.

Materials:
Glass or plastic; talcum powder; clear packing tape; black construction paper (approximately 2 x 2 inches, one for each student); Fingerprint Chart; washable ink pad; magnifying glass.

Directions:
1. Divide students into pairs and distribute the glass or plastic, talcum powder, tape, and black paper.
2. Each student should create a latent (hidden) fingerprint by pressing a finger onto a sheet of glass or plastic (a glass slide from the science lab would be perfect). Students should be careful not to let their partner see which finger they use.
3. Lightly shake talcum powder over the print and blow it off.
4. Using a piece of tape, gently place it smoothly over the print, pull it off, and stick it on the black paper.
5. Next, distribute the Fingerprint Chart, ink pads, and magnifying glasses to students.
6. Demonstrate the proper fingerprinting technique to students: lightly roll finger on ink pad and then lightly roll finger onto chart.
7. Have students complete their Fingerprint Chart and using a magnifying glass when necessary, label each print as an arch, loop, or whorl.
8. Partners should exchange their latent fingerprints and Fingerprint Charts to see if their partner can determine which finger yielded the latent print.
9. Lead a discussion on the activity and have students share their findings with the class. Was identifying a latent print easy or hard? Take a poll to discover which fingerprint pattern was most common. What are other methods for positively identifying individuals?

“6.13, 1963. Rifle that killed Medgar Evers. Located latent fingerprints on telescopic site. Medgar was shot off Delta Drive, Jackson, Miss.” From the Ralph Hargrove Collection. MDAH, Archives and Records Services.
Directions: Place each fingerprint in the appropriate box. Below fingerprint, label each as an arch, loop, or whorl using the above images as a guide.

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<tr>
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<th>Right Index Finger</th>
<th>Right Middle Finger</th>
<th>Right Ring Finger</th>
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Images from [http://www.uh.edu/engines/epi2529.htm](http://www.uh.edu/engines/epi2529.htm).
Beckwith, Evers families agree: They want justice

By Beverly Pettigrew Kraft
Clanton-Ledger Staff Writer

Relatives of Medgar Evers and Byron De La Beckwith expressed similar feelings about the painful wait they have endured in the 29 years since Evers was killed.

"I am so weary of having people say that it has been so long and, for that reason, this case should be dropped," Myrlie Evers, widow of the slain Mississippi NAACP leader, said after listening to state Supreme Court arguments Thursday.

"Do people criticize when the German war criminals are pursued for those injustices they did to people? Why is this different?"

Speaking to reporters separately, the son of the man accused of killing Medgar Evers said he also wants to see a conclusion to the case.

"Both families have suffered. Both families have lost a lot," said Byron De La Beckwith VII. "I would like to hear the truth as much as she would like to hear the truth. We are just going about it in different ways."

Myrlie Evers, a retired Los Angeles commissioner, said she thinks prosecutors now have a stronger case against Beckwith in the June 12, 1963, sniper slaying at the Jackson home she still owns.

"That's one of the reasons for my almost desperation that this case go to trial," she said. "It's very evident that justice has not been done in this case and this is what I, as Medgar's wife and widow and the mother of his children, am crying out for."

See EVERS, 9A

From 1A

"Time is a factor in my life too. The pain never leaves. The nightmares never leave," she said.

Evers said her hopes for a trial reflect concerns that other civil rights-era slayings should be re-examined.

As Mississippi NAACP field secretary, Medgar Evers investigated some of those deaths before he was killed.

"We have to settle these dastardly acts of old," she said. "If we don't, we live with ghosts that will haunt us forever."

Byron De La Beckwith VII, a 46-year-old Aberdeen tire salesman, said he hopes the Supreme Court will dismiss the case and keep his father from facing a third murder trial.

"I think the law should have pursued this thing harder in 1964," he said. "Justice needs to be done and it needs to be done in the court, not in the media." 

"The Beckwiths have gone through 30 years of suffering and humiliation and embarrassment over this."

Beckwith carries his father's name and passed the name on to his son. But he says, philosophically, "I am a different generation. I just have different beliefs."

He said he doesn't embrace his father's white supremacist beliefs, but does support segregation.

He didn't get to hear arguments before the court Thursday. Only one seat remained in the courtroom when he and his adult son arrived. He gave the seat to Byron De La Beckwith VII and waited outside.

About 85 spectators filled the courtroom. Others were turned away. More than a dozen officers from Capitol Police, Jackson police, the Hinds County Sheriff's Department and the Highway Patrol monitored the crowd and required spectators to sign a roster.

Directions: In the 1990s and early 2000s, numerous civil rights era murder cases were reopened. Many of the victims were civil rights leaders that were almost forgotten. Many of the individuals on trial, such as Byron De La Beckwith, had been living free for decades, were elderly, and in some cases ill, when they went on trial, were convicted, and imprisoned. Using the Clarion Ledger article from October 16, 1992, that provides the views of the Evers and Beckwith families on this issue, consider the following: Is it important to continue to search out and bring to justice individuals or groups for civil rights violations that occurred over 50 years ago? Write 2-3 paragraphs explaining why or why not.
**assassin:** a murderer, especially one who kills a political prominent person.

**bail:** property or money given as security that a person released from police custody will return at an appointed time.

**defendant:** a person or company against whom a claim or charge is brought in court.

**district attorney:** an official who acts as attorney for the people or government of a specific district.

**evidence:** data presented to a court or jury in proof of the facts at issue and which may include the testimony of witnesses, records, documents, or objects.

**forensics:** the application of science to conduct an investigation and answer questions.

**indictment:** a formal accusation initiating a criminal case.

**informant:** a person who supplies data to investigators.

**justice:** rightfulness or lawfulness.

**Ku Klux Klan:** an organization founded in 1866 that resists political and economic equality for African Americans.

**latent:** present but not yet visible.

**mistrial:** an inconclusive trial, such as where the jury cannot agree and is dismissed.

**National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP):** a civil rights organization established in 1909 to protect the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights off all citizens.

**prosecutor:** the public officer in a county, district or other jurisdiction charged with carrying on the prosecution in criminal proceedings.

**testify:** to give evidence while under oath.

**transcript:** a written, typed, or printed copy of an original, especially one having an official status.

**verdict:** the finding or answer of a jury given to the court.

**White Citizen's Council:** a group formed in 1954 to oppose racial integration.
TEACHER NAME ________________________________________________________________

SCHOOL NAME & ADDRESS ____________________________________________________________

EMAIL (OPTIONAL) _____________________________________________________________________________________________

TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS __________________________ GRADE LEVEL __________________________

1. In your opinion, did this unit elicit better than average student response; if so, how?

2. Which segments of the unit exceeded your students’ attention span?

3. Will this unit be of assistance to you in developing future classroom activities; if so, how?

4. How did this unit add to your earlier teaching on the same subject?

5. Would this teaching unit be handier to use as a:
   ___ single-day unit   ___ multi-day unit   ___ multi-week unit   ___ other

6. Were the activities and lessons appropriate for your students? How?
Please rate the following lesson materials and activities by circling the appropriate number.

4=excellent, 3=good, 2=average, 1=inadequate

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We would appreciate any additional comments on this teaching unit and any suggestions for improvement. Comments may be entered in the space below.