

COMING TO MONUMENTS CURRICULUM GUIDE



Recent events, such as the Emmanuel AME shooting in Charleston, and the Charlottesville riots in Virginia, have reignited the national debate on the purpose of monuments and the different meanings they represent to diverse communities. Locally and limited by the South Carolina Heritage Act, the City of Charleston debates the status of its own monuments to John C. Calhoun and others. Focusing on the time between Reconstruction through the Civil Rights Movement, *Coming to Monuments* unites contemporary dance, theater, and storytelling to unpack the history behind Confederate memorials and the conflicted legacy their presence bestows. Fundamental to the 50-minute piece is the use of primary sources that provide the inspiration for the structure, movement, and the “score” of original music and poetry by Marcus Amaker, Charleston Poet Laureate, as well as first-person narratives and monologues. The work seeks to present a nuanced and multifaceted perspective that will serve as a platform for audience deliberation and dialogue.

Suitable for grades 6th-high school

South Carolina History Content Standards for 8th grade:

8-5.3, 8-5.4, 8-7.2, 8-7.3

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Choreography: Erin Leigh in collaboration with the cast

Poetry: Marcus Amaker

Music: Dave Bourne Saloon Piano, Jon Baptiste, Marcus Amaker & Quentin E. Baxter, Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra, Rachel's, tape loop

Narration: Marcus Amaker, Nakeisha Daniel, Teralyn Tanner Reiter

Costumes: Camille Pompeii

Cast: Lydia "Raqui" Brown
Lamar Hunter
Marielle Richardson
Georgia Schrubbe
Lily Watkins

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MARCUS AMAKER



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THE POETRY OF MARCUS AMAKER

Marcus Amaker is Charleston's first poet laureate and an award-winning graphic designer. He is also a videographer, web designer, and musician. He has published seven poetry books and has created more than 30 electronic music albums. He also helped to create the entertainment newspaper Charleston Scene and is the graphic designer for the national music journal No Depression. Amaker visits many schools to conduct poetry workshops and inspires students to write. In 2016, he was named as one of Charleston's Most Influential People.

ARTS INTEGRATED ACTIVITY

Provide students with magazines and construction paper, scissors, glue, and crayons or colored pencils. After reading the poems, consider the following questions: Does a poem tell a story and if so how? How do the poems make you feel? What images or symbols do you remember from the poem?

Students then select one of the three poems and make a list of symbols or images that are important in the poem. Have the class look at examples of collages by visiting the International Museum of Collage. Students will create a collage by cutting images from the magazines or using construction paper to cut or draw images. Students arrange them on another sheet of construction paper to create their collage. Encourage students to overlap their images the same way a poem creates meaning through a series of images. Once finished, have students explain the process they used to create their collage.

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mahogany

Who decided to call us “black and white”?
When I look at my skin,
I don’t see black,
I see brown.

Brown. Like the color of sand,
a brilliant tan that needs no sun.
Brown, like the mahogany tree bark,
grounded in summer,
whose green leaves
make the transition into fall,
coffee-stained by the autumn’s cool
breeze.

Who decided to call us “black and white”?
When I look at my wife,
I don’t see white,
I see brown.
Just a lighter shade
than mine.

Brown is the cinnamon
that colors her iris.
Brown are the arms
that wrap around me
during a bronze sunset.
Brown are the layered bricks
of our home’s foundation.

Who decided to call us “black and white”?
When I look at you,
I see shades of brown.
A sea of one color.
Ripples of love
floating along a sea change.

There are so many words used to divide
us.

To fool us into seeing ourselves
through foggy lenses.

We are more
than a box-checked statistic,
we are more
than a census.

I am not black
or white.

I am awake.

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empath (bones)

If the Angel Oak could talk,
she'd tell us stories
we don't want to hear.

Her family
has been roped
into being the backdrop
of racism's roots,

her friends
had no choice
but to stand, stoic
through storms
that bore
strange fruit.

She'd tell you
about the relentless
weight of bones on branches.

How trees
never wanted to be
co-stars in a play for punishment,
the background
of a soul's curtain call
in the absurd
theatre of America.

The Angel Oak tree
has been watching descendants of death
walk away
from the echoes
of their past
and ignore the reflections
a bloodline can cast.

She says,
"Let me
introduce you
to your shadow."

Let me tell you
about my sisters and brothers
who were helpless
as the piercing pain of ghosts
were birthed
from innocent bodies
for show,

let me guide
your people
through my
forest of memory.

I am cursed
to live
with this pain.

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calloused hands

(inspired by Dave the Potter,
written for the Charleston Museum)

what history
will we carve
with our hands?

will it be
an unfiltered truth
as written word,
tattooed
on the body
of pottery
when reading
and writing
were
revolutionary?

will our hands
hold each other
in crisis
again
and again
when our bodies
are fragile
and bone-dry,
coiling
the repetition
of past mistakes,
shaped
by the fires
of racism?

will America
hold out
her hands
to the ghosts
of our ancestors
and repair her history?

her body
has been molded
by violence
and hardened
by the heat of wars.

we are
passing down pain
to our youth
with calloused hands.

history has been
sculpted
for us,

but we'll
continue
to have faith
that our future
is malleable
as clay.

I am ready
and willing
to shape
a better future
for tomorrow,

but today,
we are just
echoes
of the past.

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THE LOST CAUSE



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THE LOST CAUSE;

HISTORY:

“The Lost Cause is a movement that defined the Confederate cause as a heroic one against great odds despite its defeat. Many white Southerners were devastated economically, emotionally and psychologically after the war. The ideology endorses the virtues of the antebellum South, viewing the American Civil War as an honorable struggle for the Southern way of life while minimizing or denying the central role of slavery.”

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lost_Cause_of_the_Confederacy)

Women were instrumental in helping construct the Lost Cause narrative. In *Coming to Monuments*, a solo is performed to a letter from *Our Women in the War: A Series of Papers* written by Southern Ladies, published in the *South Carolina News and Courier*. The letter has the hallmarks of the Lost Cause narrative such as the bitter and nostalgic south, the virtuous Confederate army against the inhumane Northern aggressor, and the docile and content Negroes.

Confederate memorials and monuments play a key role in reinforcing the Lost Cause narrative. Many are the result of the work of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) which is the oldest Southern organization of female descendants of Confederate soldiers and statesmen. The UDC mission is to honor the memory of their fallen servicemen as well as present their history and love of Confederate patriotism.

The letter is a key moment in *Coming to Monuments* because it helps the audience envision the south after losing the war and the effect the loss had on southern people. Discuss with the students the final line of the text. “We have years ago forgiven all who wronged us, but do not ask us to forget.” Why would the letter end this way? What does it mean for America today?

WEBSITES:

- The American Battlefield Trust has a page dedicated to American Art and the Civil War. Hear interviews with curators and learn why there aren't more photographs of the war. Scroll down further to learn about Confederate painter Conrad Rise Chapman's paintings of Civil War Charleston.

<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/civil-war-and-american-art>

- Visit a photo gallery from Ken Burns's PBS documentary on the Civil War

<http://www.pbs.org/kenburns/civil-war/photo-gallery/>

- The Library of Congress page of Civil War photograph

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/civwar/>

ARTS INTEGRATED ACTIVITY:

Select a photo from one of the websites that has one or more people in it. Write a letter from the perspective of someone in the photo. Ask yourself, who would this person want to write a letter to? What have they learned from the experience in the photograph? Are they the same person or has the experience changed them? What do you think are the person's goals, hopes, and needs after this experience? Show your photograph and read the letter to a classmate.

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THE LOST CAUSE: LETTER IN COMING TO MONUMENTS

Ah! Those old days! How the memory of them clings to us and a halo of romance and passionate regret surrounds them with a setting of glory. We triumphed and wept and lived a great deal during those four years of war. The deepest sentiments of our souls were stirred by the joy of victory, the ardor of endeavor, and the heart wearying struggle for patience under defeat. "Happy are those who have never had occasion to learn the meaning of the words disaster, calamity, defeat."

I myself am not a heroine. I only lived among those who fought and "made history" and was an ardent, enthusiastic Confederate.

In December, South Carolina seceded from the union, and I shall never forget the evening that the Ordinance of Secession was signed. The scene was one of extraordinary impressiveness and enthusiasm. There was scarcely standing room in the big hall for the eager crowd of witnesses, and the galleries were packed with ladies. The delegates went up one by one and signed the ordinance, the cheering was vehement, and the ladies waved their handkerchiefs in approval. Never was an act performed with more unanimity.

It has become the fashion now to say that none of us wished to secede and that the state was made to withdraw from the Union. This statement is most assuredly an incorrect one, for not a member of the large convention refused to sign his name. No voice was raised that night, save in acclamation. No one living in Charleston, can say that he was ignorant of what took place and of the public acquiescence in the deed.

Having spent the entire winter of 1862 in the country, I can give some account of plantation life at the period. The negroes were perfectly subordinate and worked as stealthily as if no gunboats were at the river. Forty hands from one of my neighbor's estates went off with the enemy, but as a general rule, they made no effort to leave and my father's remained with us and were always perfectly cheerful and respectful.

The Yankees tried to stir up animosity among us; and judging from their newspapers they seemed to think an insurrection was to be expected. But we had confidence in the goodwill with which we knew prevailed between the whites and the blacks, and only a few in the Confederacy even dreaded such catastrophe. Hmm.

The years rolled by and the war dragged its weary course. Our ports were closed, the people at home lost heart, and our men were left in rags, yet they fought on gallantly to the end. Meanwhile Sherman having no one to oppose him marched his army through Savannah. Ashes and charred timbers were the tokens these manly Vandals left behind while the homeless children shivered that bitter January.

I cannot understand why Sherman should deny that his men burnt Columbia, when there were so many living witnesses of the fact, and hundreds who can testify to his fiery march from the Savannah River to the boundary line of North Carolina. Where the truth is so evident I don't see the object of telling a falsehood.

We have years ago forgiven all who wronged us, but do not ask us to forget.

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SEPTIMA CLARK



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SEPTIMA CLARK: HOW COME THE PAVEMENT STOPS WHERE THE BLACK SECTION BEGINS?

HISTORY:

- Born May 3rd, 1898 in Charleston, South Carolina
- Attended the Avery Normal School for high school and studied to become a teacher
- In 1916, began teaching on John's Island which helped her later when she returned to set-up Citizenship Schools. Black people were prohibited from teaching in Charleston public school (on the peninsula)
- Petitioned with the NAACP for black teachers to teach in Charleston. She went door to door and got 20,000 signatures from black parents.
- 1950's, worked at the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee where black and white teachers worked together to end segregation. She was arrested for her efforts.
- Established Citizenship Schools throughout the south which helped African Americans become citizens by teaching them to read and understand the law
- Dr. King called her the "mother of the Civil Rights movement"
- Septima Clark's main belief was that education was the KEY to a better life.

WEBSITES:

To learn more about Septima, check out the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee Website:

<https://snccdigital.org/people/septima-clark/>

Learn about other Civil Rights leaders via the National Portrait Gallery

<http://npg.si.edu/learn/classroom-resource/struggle-justice>

Listen to an interview with Septima Clark via the Low Country Digital Library at the College of Charleston:

<http://lcdl.library.cofc.edu/lcdl/catalog/lcdl:48268>

Springboards for Discussion:

- 0:25-5:17 (Conditions on John's Island at the Promise Land School. Can you imagine living in these conditions?)
- 5:17-8:28 (Field trips to Angel Oak) Who has heard of the Angel Oak? Who has visited? What was it like?
- 12:20-14:22 (Promise Land School compared with the white school across the street) Have you noticed any differences that Septima spoke about? How are things different today?

ARTS INTEGRATED ACTIVITY:

Standing in a circle, ask students one at a time to say their name (first and last, nicknames, or first, middle, last. Your choice). Loud and clear. This allows them to take ownership of themselves and their names. It is their name, the only name they have. They must take pride in this and know they represent something bigger just as Septima Clark did. Ask the student to imagine that their hand is a pen. The tip of the pen can be any part of the hand, the fingers, the palm, the wrist, etc. Have them write their name in the space in front of their body as big as they can while they say their name. The "paper" is all the space around them. Have them repeat the activity traveling from one side of the room to the other as if the room was a giant piece of paper but now the pen is any part of their foot.

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SEPTIMA CLARK: NARRATIVE IN COMING TO MONUMENTS

My name is Septima Clark and I was born in Charleston, SC on May 3rd, 1898.

My father was born a slave on Poinsett Plantation. My mother boasted she was never a slave, but I have a feeling somebody paid her way out. I learned from my mother not to be afraid and how to stand your ground. Her courage would help me later when confronted by the Klan and White Citizen's Councils.

My parents were determined that I would get a good education. In those days, blacks and whites were taught in separate schools. Black schools were painted black, and white schools were painted white. In the black schools, it was 100 students to 1 white teacher. I decided I wanted to do something about the system in America.

I went to school to become a teacher, but I couldn't teach in my hometown. Black teachers weren't permitted to teach in Charleston schools. In 1919 I joined the NAACP and went door to door collecting signatures to permit black teachers to teach in black schools. I collected over 20,000 signatures and we succeeded. But it took another 20 years for black teachers to be paid the same as whites.

I began working at the Highlander Folk School, in Tennessee. There, Southerners and Northerners, whites and blacks, were working together to end segregation. Even Dr. King and Rosa Parks attended. I had never dreamed that I could speak openly to a white man until Highlander. They called me an agitator, a communist. They made up false charges and arrested me. It was two white teachers who paid my bail.

At Highlander, I designed a curriculum for Citizenship Schools. According to US statistics, there were 12 million illiterates in the South. If they were illiterate, they would not be able to read enough to register to vote in most southern states. We traveled by bus all over the south setting up schools teaching adults how to read and understand election laws, so that they could register and vote. Our schools empowered black people to stand up for their rights in their own communities. But it wasn't easy. Anyone in the black community who helped us suffered. The White Citizens' Councils and Ku Klux Klan threatened us. Despite the harassment, we trained nearly 10,000 teachers and set up schools anywhere we could.

Dr. King once said that Citizenship Schools were the basis for the Civil Rights Movement. By 1970, nearly 2 million more black people were voting in the south.

Isn't that something?

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THE TIMELINE

The Timeline was the hardest part of Coming to Monuments to choreograph and may be the most surprising for audiences. Dancers aren't usually asked to speak and dance at the same time. Each dancer had to memorize at least 10 different lines to say at the right time in the choreography. The company worked with a theater coach to help with timing and diction.

The Timeline focuses on the years between the end of Reconstruction and the Civil Rights movement, an era often referred to as Jim Crow. Key dates and events in the struggle for African American equal rights are juxtaposed against southern policies to disenfranchise black citizens sometimes violently. The increasing number of monuments is highlighted to shed light on the relationship between the two. During the timeline, dancers perform African American social dances that were popular with both whites and blacks such as the Cakewalk, the Charleston, the Lindy Hop, and other dances that were famous at the Big Apple in Columbia, SC.

WEBSITES:

- Lowcountry Digital History Initiative: After Slavery: Race, Labor, and Politics in the Post-Emancipation Carolinas with interactive timeline
http://ldhi.library.cofc.edu/exhibits/show/after_slavery/unit_one_as
- Charleston County Public Library, Charleston Time Machine Podcast: Too-la-Loo for the Fourth of July. The Too-la-Loo was a popular African American celebration dance and festival celebrating the emancipation. After Reconstruction, it was increasingly restricted leading to its demise.
<https://soundcloud.com/user-242710718/too-la-loo-for-the-fourth-of-julycharleston-time-machine>
- Post and Courier, August 2, 2013, The sit-in that changed Charleston
https://www.postandcourier.com/archives/the-sit-in-that-changedcharleston/article_6a817d6e-e67b-53d8-8ec0-7fb0345b51cf.htm

ARTS INTEGRATED ACTIVITY:

Photographs and news footage of Civil Rights marches and confrontations with the police played a major role in influencing the American public's understanding of the struggles of African Americans and galvanizing public support for Civil Rights legislation. These same photographs inspired Dance Matters to create a dance "phrase", or sentence, based off of hand gestures and body position in the photos like the ones below. Divide students into small groups and have them research at least 10-15 photographs from the Civil Rights movement. Select 8 powerful gestures or images from the photos and create a similar movement for each (so you will have 8 different movements). Sequence the movements one after another into a dance phrase. Groups perform their phrases for the class to music with a similar sentiment such as People Get Ready by Curtis Mayfield, Everyday People by Sly and the Family Stone, or music from today! Discuss why music and dance are such powerful tools for inspiring changes in people's actions and attitudes.

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THE TIMELINE: CIVIL RIGHTS IMAGES



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THE TIMELINE IN COMING TO MONUMENTS

- May 13, 1865 The end of the War of Northern Aggression, the War between the States.
- The Civil War. The 21st US Colored Infantry marches into Charleston.
- 1868. An all-white state legislature rewrites the state constitution. Black Codes restrict the new freedom of the emancipated slaves.
- Two Confederate monuments are erected.
- 1867 The Reconstruction Acts. The 14th amendment grants citizenship for former slaves. The 15th guarantees Black men the right to vote.
- A bi-racial state legislature writes a new, new constitution expanding civil rights and a right to a public education.
- Joseph Rainey is the first African American in South Carolina to become a U.S. Representative.
- USC accepts its first black student. All the white students and faculty leave.
- 1876 Southern Democrats and the Redshirts usher in the age of Governor Wade Hampton, savior of the south, redeemer from the negroes and carpetbaggers, proponent of the Lost Cause.
- 150 blacks were murdered during his campaign.
- The 1877 Compromise. Federal troops withdrawal from SC.
- 20,000 African Americans flee the state.
- 1882 The Eight Ballot Box Law requires ballots are placed in the correct labeled boxes election managers would read the correct labels to an illiterate white man but the incorrect labels to an illiterate black man.
- 1887 Charleston erects its first monument to John C. Calhoun.
- Black voting drops from 58,000 to 14,000 voters.
- Lydia: (walking around the tableau) 1895 Governor Ben Tillman and the new, new, new state constitution requires poll taxes and literacy laws in order to register to vote.
- The marriage of a white person with a negro or mulatto shall be unlawful and void.
- "... no child of either race shall ever be permitted to attend a school for children of the other race."
- 1896 Plessy vs. Ferguson upholds separate but equal and denies blacks the right to serve on a jury.
- A new, taller monument to Calhoun is erected after the first was repeatedly vandalized by African Americans.
- 1919 The race riot of Charleston.
- 1368 Confederate Monuments have been built.
- 1941. Over a million African Americans will serve in WWII.
- 1946 Elmore vs. Rice ends the all-white primary.
- 1948 Citizenship Schools are started on John's Island.
- Thurgood Marshall petitions the state for equal black schools in Clarendon County.
- White schools had 33 buses. Black schools had none.
- Wait, what year is it?

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THE TIMELINE IN COMING TO MONUMENTS

- 1951 Briggs vs. Elliot. Separate but equal is constitutional.
- 1954, Brown v. Board of Education. Separate is in fact not equal and racial segregation in public schools is unconstitutional.
- Columbia, SC. Sallie Mae Flemming refuses to sit on the back of the bus.
- 1957 The Ku Klux Klan rallies at the State House
- 1960. Students from Burke HS lead a sit-in at the Kress lunch counter in Charleston.
- 1961 The Friendship Nine leads a non-violent sit-in in Rock Hill.
- 1962 Martin Luther King speaks at Emanuel AME in Charleston
- The Confederate flag flies over the statehouse.
- 1963 The Charleston Movement. Thousands of African Americans are jailed demanding equal rights under the law.
- South Carolina is the second to last state to desegregate public schools.
- Clemson and USC enroll their first black students.
- "We don't want to integrate."
- 1964 The Civil Rights Act ends segregated public facilities.
- Southern Democrats leave for the Republican party over Civil Rights
- 1965 The Voting Rights Act removes voting restrictions. The number of African American voters more than doubles.
- 1968. The Orangeburg Massacre. Black students from SC State College struggle to desegregate a bowling alley four years after the Civil Rights Act was passed. Dozens are wounded. 3 students die.
- Over 4000 lynchings have occurred in the United States.
- The South Carolina Heritage Act "No historical monument can be altered or removed without two thirds vote in both chambers of the state's general assembly."

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MONUMENTS

“The effort to remove them is about more than symbolism. It’s about starting a conversation about the values and beliefs shared by a community. It’s about understanding our history as a nation.”

Coming to Monuments invites audiences to consider who is and isn’t memorialized and what are the values those decisions imply. Dancers “sculpt” each other into statutes and create tableaux based on actual Confederate memorials in Charleston, SC. For the ending of the piece, the dancers create memorials to figures often overlooked in American history such as Septima Clark, Millicent Brown, and Denmark Vesey. Many municipalities in the south debate whether to remove Confederate memorials. Charleston mayor, John Tecklenburg, called for a new plaque near the existing John C. Calhoun monument on Marion Square in downtown Charleston. The language for this plaque has undergone several revisions and to this day, has not been approved. Other cities such as New Orleans have or are planning to remove memorials. Coming to Monuments seeks to use the divisive history of the monuments to engage young people in South Carolina history and to encourage them to become more active in issues that are important to them.

WEBSITES:

Charleston City Paper, Aug. 31, 2017, Charleston mayor calls for new monuments

<https://www.charlestoncitypaper.com/TheBattery/archives/2017/08/31/charleston-mayor-calls-for-newmonuments-and-updated-historical-markers-totell-citys-full-story>

Post and Courier, June 4, 2018, Most Confederate memorials remain, despite backlash after Emanuel AME shooting

https://www.postandcourier.com/news/mostconfederate-memorials-remain-despite-backlashafter-emanuel-ame-shooting/article_38261e00-65ca-11e8-8d31-4f837e7eded5.html

Charleston Stories, If Charleston Monuments Could Talk What Stories Would They Tell

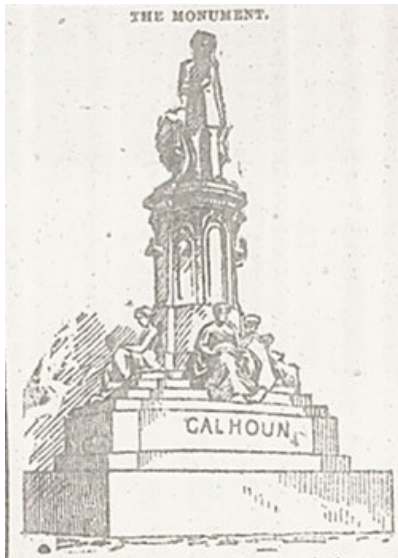
<http://charlestonstories.org/img/city-map.pdf>

ARTS INTEGRATED ACTIVITIES:

The Charleston Justice Journey and Charleston Stories are two new initiatives that highlight the neglected figures in Charleston history and account for the untold stories of injustices. Are there other important figures in American history (or in one’s personal history) that deserve to be memorialized? If so how would you memorialize them? Look at examples of other types of memorials such as the 9/11 Memorial and Museum, the recently unveiled proposed memorial for the Emanuel AME Church shootings, and student examples of alternative memorials. Read about an architect’s creative process when designing memorials. In small groups, have students select either a person who they think has made a positive impact in the world or an event that shouldn’t be forgotten. As a group, the students create a tableau, or pose, with their bodies to construct a memorial to that person or event. Look at different example of memorials for more inspiration. The challenge is how to construct that memorial using bodies instead of stone.

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MONUMENTS



1887 First monument to John C. Calhoun erected at Marion Square in Charleston.

1896 A new, taller monument is built at Marion Square in Charleston to John C. Calhoun.



1932 Confederate Defenders of Charleston erected at White Point Gardens, Charleston.

2014 Monument to Denmark Vesey erected at Hampton Park in Charleston.

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MILLCENT BROWN: SOMEBODY HAD TO DO IT



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MILLCENT BROWN

HISTORY:

- Born in Charleston
- She was born in a family that was active in the NAACP and fought for change in the community
- 1963 Millicent Brown et al. was the case in her name that would desegregate public schools in Charleston.
- She attended Rivers High School
- She had the grades to be in the Honor Society but they voted her out.
- First black dancer to perform with Charleston Ballet and attended the Dock Street Theater School.
- Did not want to go to the white school, but somebody had to do it.

Discussion question: What does segregation means? What does integration mean?

WEBSITES:

Lowcountry Digital History Initiative, Somebody Had To Do It: First Children in School Desegregation

http://ldhi.library.cofc.edu/exhibits/show/somebody_had_to_do_it/struggle_for_equal_ed

Charleston Magazine, Feb. 2016, Somebody Had To Do It

https://charlestonmag.com/features/somebody_had_to_do_it

Post and Courier Article, Sept. 1, 2013, A walk that changed history

https://www.postandcourier.com/archives/a-walk-that-changed-history/article_ee3af16c-3d68-5cfeaf16-a2ce276f4160.html

Free Law Project, Court Listener, Brown v. School District No. 20, Charleston, South Carolina, 226 F. Supp. 819 (E.D.S.C. 1963)

<https://www.courtlistener.com/opinion/2143122/brown-v-school-district-no-20-charleston-south-car/>

ARTS INTEGRATED ACTIVITY:

Students can either research a historical figure that they admire such as Martin Luther King, Jackie Robinson, and Josephine Baker. Have students read the monologue of Millicent Brown and to think about the details in her narrative that make it memorable. Have the students to imagine an important event from this person's and brainstorm everything the person saw, smelled, or heard. Imagine what it like years later to recollect and retell the event later. Students then use these notes to write a monologue. This website has helpful strategies for teaching students to write monologues.

<http://www.bbbpress.com/2017/05/how-to-write-a-monologue-lesson-plan/>

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MILLICENT BROWN MONOLOGUE

Ok. I'm Millicent Brown. I was born in Charleston into an activist household. It's no surprise that because my parents were in the NAACP that our family took the lead desegregating Charleston. Understand now, you're talking about a totally Jim Crow society, so bit by bit, every aspect of life needed to be desegregated like lunch counters, parks, swimming pools, and schools. Like most of the nation, especially in the South, South Carolina ignored the 1954 Supreme Court Brown decision. So in 1963, Millicent Brown et. Al became the case that ultimately desegregated the public schools in South Carolina. Charleston was the leader.

There were 11 of us. Most attended lower grades. Ralph went to Charleston High, but he had a rough time and dropped out. Jackie and I went to Rivers. Of course, the attention was on me because the case was in my name. I was "Millicent Brown: representative of the race."

I used to wait on the corner for my mother to pick me up from school and kids would come by in their cars and make sure to splash water on me as they sped off; make sure not to walk with me in the hallways, not sit with me. One student asked me, "is it true Black folks have tails?"

I had the grades to be in the honor society, but they voted me out.

Looking back at my high school transcripts, I read things like "displayed no leadership capacity" and "was not outstanding in terms of extra-curricular activities." Not one word ... "oh by the way, she was one of the first Black Kids."

Black people my age, who I thought would be my biggest backers... weren't. They didn't want to go to the white school. I had a boyfriend that was playing basketball at the all black school, and when I went to see him play, and I got taunted. "What are you doing here? You knew you always wanted to be white anyway." I was disillusioned because I thought I was representing ALL of us.

But I was determined to be bigger. I was always representing the race. I became the first black dancer to perform with the Charleston Ballet and later trained at the Dock Street Theater. It was a way of finding some experience that I didn't have access to in the Black Community because I wasn't going to be in anyone's senior class play. You see?

My senior year, all these things came crashing down. I started developing serious symptoms and they thought I had a heart condition because I had trouble breathing. I couldn't walk five feet without just being totally out of breath. The nerves in my chest simply gripped.

I had never been encouraged to let the anger out. Momma kept saying "Honey, just be bigger people than them." "I'm as big as I can be! I can't get any bigger!" My Father and I got into it one time when I said, "Please, let me go back to the black school. Please let me go back." And he said, "no, you have to stick with it."

"Somebody's gotta do it."

