

# COLLECTIONS IN THE CLASSROOM

## Remove Riot Gear sign on Monument Avenue, 2020



### ERA

Early 21st Century

### THEMES

Violence, Lost Cause

### CITATION

Remove Riot Gear sign, 2020, Heidi Abbott, V.2021.31.19, The Valentine

### ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- Describe this image. What do you notice?
- What does “Gathering Place for the People...Remove Riot Gear to Qualify” mean?
- How does the threat of violence influence behavior?

### CONTEXT

In the summer of 2020, people protested around the world after George Floyd, a Black man in Minnesota, was killed by police officers during his arrest for an alleged nonviolent crime. In Richmond, many of the demonstrations centered around the Confederate statues in Monroe Park and on Monument Avenue as rallying points to stand against excessive violence toward Black people by police. In the initial days of the protests around the Richmond monuments, police wore riot gear and fired tear gas into the crowd. Some Richmonders unofficially renamed Robert E. Lee Circle, calling it "Marcus-David Peters Circle" after a Black Richmond man killed by police in 2018. During the summer and fall of 2020, the space became a place for community where people could register to vote, learn about others killed by police violence, garden, listen to music and see light projections of civil rights icons. In January 2021, state officials closed the space by erecting a fence around the Lee Monument, and, later that year, removed the monument entirely.

## DISCOVER RICHMOND STORIES

For more stories visit [thevalentine.org](http://thevalentine.org) or email [education@thevalentine.org](mailto:education@thevalentine.org)





Remove Riot Gear sign, 2020, Heidi Abbott, V.2021.31.19, The Valentine