

This Is the Dream

By Diane Z. Shore & Jessica Alexander

Reader 1:

**These are the fountains that stand in the square,
And the black-and-white signs say who will drink where.
These are the buses—a dime buys a ride,
But the people are sorted by color inside.**

Reader 2:

**These are the restaurants where “WHITES ONLY” eat
At tables up front and at lunch-counter seats.
These are the libraries, two separate sections,
With separate bookcases and separate selections.**

Reader 3:

**These are the doors that are closed in the schools,
And “separate but equal” is not just a rule
But a law that’s enforced on the buses and trains
And in theaters, restrooms, department-store chains,
And in libraries, hospitals—all public places,
Dividing up people by colors and races
With harsh written words that are slapped on the walls,
Denying both freedom and justice for all.**

Reader 4:

**These are the students who step through the doors
Where people of color have not walked before.
These are the passengers, on weary feet,
Walking until they can choose their own seat.**

Reader 5:

**These are the diners who sit and who wait
At the “WHITES ONLY” counter, ignoring the hate.
These are the marchers who forge through the street
As they carry their message through shimmering heat.**

Reader 6:

**These are the leaders whose powerful voices
Lift up the marchers demanding new choices
For fair-paying jobs and a good education,
To vote without fear and to live in a nation
Where everyone’s equal and judged from within,
Never jailed or arrested because of their skin;
Fighting firm without fists, sitting down, standing tall,
Pressing onward toward freedom and justice for all.**

Reader 1:

**This is the fountain that stands in the square,
And the unwritten rule is to take turns and share.
This is the bus that roars through the streets,
And all of the passengers choose their own seats.**

Reader 2:

**This is the restaurant where, up in the front,
The black-and-white sign says “OPEN FOR LUNCH.”
This is the library, books wall to wall
Free to be read—not by some but by all.**

Reader 3:

**This is the school where the doors open wide,
And the children are learning together inside
About students and marchers and leaders who fought
To make right what was wrong. Without violence they sought
To make changes together, establish new laws.**

ALL:

**With many small triumphs they strengthened their cause
As they sat at the counters and rode through the stations
And gathered up hands as they marched through the nation;
With courage they rallied and answered the call...
 dreaming of freedom and justice for all.**

Shore, D., & Alexander, J. (2006). *This is the dream*. New York: HarperCollins.