



# AMERICA –

MYTH OF THE AMERICAN DREAM PROJECT 4



---

America –  
Is it a balance?  
Does it use a tipping scale?  
When one side is deprived  
Does that give another more?

America –  
Does it have limits?  
One set amount of joy?  
If one wants to be happy  
Must another then be sad?

America –  
Who does it help?  
Who truly benefits?  
When all must battle, violently,  
For scraps of wealth and peace?

---

This America –  
It's the one I recognize.  
It's the one that says  
Immigrants stole our jobs;  
Aren't most of us immigrants ourselves?

This America –  
It's so familiar to me.  
It says Black Wall Street didn't deserve nice  
things  
Because White Tulsa should've had them  
instead;  
Is our prosperity really that shallow?

This America –  
It wasn't meant to exist.  
The first vision of our nation  
Didn't think equality had to be  
The opposite of our liberty.

---

Next America –  
Could it change again?  
It feels so static  
But it always does  
And we've transformed before.

Next America –  
What might it become?  
Will it continue to be  
Full of scarcity  
Or can we embrace infinity?

Next America –  
We can make it what we choose:  
Choose to value community  
And finally see  
An American Dream for all.

# ANALYSIS: “AMERICA –”

America –  
Is it a balance?  
Does it use a tipping scale?  
When one side is deprived  
Does that give another more?

America –  
Does it have limits?  
One set amount of joy?  
If one wants to be happy  
Must another then be sad?

America –  
Who does it help?  
Who truly benefits?  
When all must battle,  
violently,  
For scraps of wealth and  
peace?

- Overview of the US to frame the argument
- Repetition of “America –” and parallel structure create unity
- Questioning provokes thought
- References *Black Wall Street*, *Death in a Promised Land*, and “American Dream”
  - One group able to achieve the American Dream and one group prevented from doing so
  - Makes it seem as if there’s a limited amount of joy and success in the world
  - Image of a violent battle references the violence seen in *Black Wall Street* and violence Black people still experience
- Key terms: joy, violence, wealth, peace

# ANALYSIS: “THIS AMERICA –”

This America –  
It’s the one I recognize.  
It’s the one that says  
Immigrants stole our jobs;  
Aren’t most of us immigrants ourselves?

This America –  
It’s so familiar to me.  
It says Black Wall Street didn’t deserve nice  
things  
Because White Tulsa should’ve had them  
instead;  
Is our prosperity really that shallow?

This America –  
It wasn’t meant to exist.  
The first vision of our nation  
Didn’t think equality had to be  
The opposite of our liberty.

- Evidence that we see joy and success as limited
- Repetition of “This America –” creates unity and shows that I’m speaking in more specific terms
- Parallel structure in first two stanzas creates unity
- First stanza referenced Essay 3
  - People resented Chinese immigrants for earning jobs
- Second stanza referenced Black Wall Street
  - White Tulsa resented Black Tulsa for achieving success
- Third stanza referenced Declaration of Independence, Lupsha, Churchwell
  - Equality and liberty were important values in the Declaration
  - Lupsha and Churchwell show the shift to valuing liberty, not equality
- Key terms: equality, liberty, prosperity, immigration, Black Wall Street

# ANALYSIS: “NEXT AMERICA –”

Next America –  
Could it change again?  
It feels so static  
But it always does  
And we’ve transformed before.

Next America –  
What might it become?  
Will it continue to be  
Full of scarcity  
Or can we embrace infinity?

Next America –  
We can make it what we  
choose:  
Choose to value community  
And finally see  
An American Dream for all.

- Looks to a future and provides a motive
- Repetition of “Next America –” creates unity and implies that we could have a different version of America in the future
- First stanza continues the reference to Churchwell
  - Churchwell showed how the American Dream has changed before
- Second stanza references the beginning of the poem
  - Return to the idea that we see success as scarce, but we could see it as infinite
- Third stanza references Lupsha
  - Emphasis that American values shape American culture
- First time using the term “American Dream” is at the end
  - Arrival point; myth in the present, but not necessarily in the future
- Key terms: static, transformation, scarcity, infinity, value, community, American Dream



**THANK YOU!**