

A Dream of Justice: The Story of Keyes v. Denver Public Schools. By Pat Pascoe. (Louisville: University Press of Colorado, 2022. viii + 326 pp. Illustrations, appendices, notes, index. \$29.95.)

Keyes v. School District No. 1 (Denver, CO) was a seminal civil rights case that has not received its due attention. In *A Dream of Justice: The Story of Keyes v. Denver Public Schools*, Pat Pascoe helps to remedy this historical erasure. Informed by Pascoe's personal experiences, *A Dream of Justice* follows the history of the case from its origins in the early 1960s to its conclusion in 1995. As a narrative history, the book provides an in-depth look at how desegregation finally came to the Denver Public Schools (DPS) and demonstrates the power of community mobilization to effect social change.

The most unique contribution of the book is its blending of the personal with more traditional historical storytelling, which produces a rich narrative of one city's school desegregation battle. Pascoe and her spouse, Monte, raised a family in Denver's Capitol Hill neighborhood. Both considered themselves liberals who supported school integration efforts. Monte ran for the DPS school board in 1969, a contentious race that pitted him and another integrationist against two segregationists. When the integrationists lost, the path was set for DPS to roll back integration efforts. The plaintiffs filed *Keyes* shortly thereafter. This school board election, Pascoe notes, was "a watershed event for racial relations in Denver" (p. 43).

What sets this telling apart is the author's own memories and reflections about the importance of the election, details that do not exist in written documents. During the campaign, for example, a group of physicians placed a newspaper ad in support of the integrationists, which was immediately followed by the placement of an ad by physicians in support of the

segregationists. According to Pascoe, one of her own doctors told her that these physicians lists dictated the ways patients were referred for years. This seemingly insignificant detail is quite revelatory. Denverites had such intense feelings about the school integration issue that they let these perspectives influence their medical decisions. Doctors, too, determined whom to refer patients to based on whether their colleagues supported integration efforts. As Pascoe maintains at the end of Chapter 3, the 1969 school board election made it clear that Denver was not the racial utopia many locals believed it was. Rather, the city was steeped in the same racism that enveloped the rest of the nation.

For historians unfamiliar with *Keyes*, the book is an excellent introduction and would serve as a solid reference guide for those looking for a case timeline and a breakdown of the most important legal documents produced during litigation. Particularly useful is Pascoe's careful attention to her primary sources, which are often reproduced in the book (in part or in full), either in the main text or in the appendices. This reproduction, however, comes at the expense of a fuller examination of the local and national contexts in which the case unfolded. Such context would enable readers to better situate the local history Pascoe describes and more fully grasp the significance of *Keyes* in the history of school desegregation and civil rights.

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