

Dreams for my father: a story of race and inheritance essay example

[Family](#), [Father](#)



The aim of this essay is to present you with the answer to one of the questions risen at the reading of the book ' Dreams for my father: A Story of Race and Inheritance'. Barack Obama wrote this book which belongs to the kind of memoirs and became a bestseller in New York in 2004 – the year in which it was reissued – nine years before he began his Senate campaign. This memoir is a book which tells its readers the autobiographic story of its writer. Barack Obama seems to have written this memoir in an effort to depict his personal route in his life to try and define himself, to define the traits of his personality and their origins.

It is common knowledge that what one is born, may take a number of different paths. It is the effect of one's surroundings, the effect of one's educational background in combination with one's generation which is carried upon his / her genes that makes what someone is to become. There has always been a lot of discussion concerning the powers, their nature and their origin, which are responsible for the path one's life chooses.

Obama seems to make an effort through writing his memoir to find out the powers which contributed to creating and empowering his own personality. Beginning his narration from the moment of his birth he goes back and forth either to the ancestors of his and the very African village on the far away area of the African continent where his father came from or to the moment he graduated from Harvard Law school and being an adult he heard that his father had died on a road accident.

One of the questions risen by reading this memoir is the theme of searching.

This essay will present you with an answer to the question regarding the theme of searching.

‘ Theme of searching in Obama’s Dreams for my Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance’

Obama is an adult when writing this memoir. He has been conquered deeply by the need to understand and interpret the forces which formed his personality. At the moment of deciding to write this memoir, we learn from his own words that he actually went through this procedure while at the same time he was going through experiences which contributed to his being evolved into an even more mature human being.

Obama felt the pain of the world and the happiness lying in the power of offering. He had started developing the sense of belonging to a community in combination with the demenad for offering if one wishes to be regarded as an active member of a society.

In the memoir the reader is informed upon Obama’s decision to travel back to Kenya in order to find out his father’s origins. Readers feel that the origins stand for a kind of compass in Obama’s journey throughout his life.

He seems to have realized that life and its truth cannot be perceived unless one knows where he comes from. Notice should be taken of the fact that origins are a concept used literally and metaphorically at the same time.

Not only does Obama feel that he must know his race and the characteristics of the place, the mentality, the culture which this place carries, but he feels that it is of crucial importance for one to have a complete idea on all the cultural elements which contributed to the creation of the profile of his surroundings.

The social and educational surroundings of one person carries all these elements of his origins. This is what Obama seems to have realized especially within the context of a family environment which is characterized by the constant absence of his father.

It is important to notice that life is seen as a journey. A journey which is supposed to be drawn and experienced as the path through which one is to fulfill his / her dreams. But the path and or paths that one is to follow during his / her journey, the stops he / she will have, the explorations which will be made, the knowledge which is to be acquired, are all dependent on one's origins.

At the same time the family environment in combination with the external influences one gets create this amalgam of external factors which are all equally important in defining the nature of one's journey in life.

Obama appears to believe in the importance of one's background and the significance of one looking into his / her roots and legacy which is carried within the context of his / her mentality and roots, but does not give the impression on believing that their power is the only one defining one's fate and destiny.

Readers become aware of the importance of looking into themselves and their family backgrounds, into exploring their personal legacy but at the same time they are given the message that the journey they are about to experience in life is not predestined by their roots and origins.

The journey begins at the point where one decides to leave his / her origin and draw his / her own independent route. This is a message of great importance if one keeps in mind that one of the personal nightmares

troubling people nowadays is the extent to which things, routes and / or decisions in life's journey are predestined by one's social class, origins, race, and inheritance, cultural and educational background.

Obama seems to have grasped the relationship developed between one's destiny and inheritance and one's future aspirations and goals.

The search performed on one's behalf for truths lying behind his origins, his race and his legacy are the truths which affect the formation and development of his / her identity.

It is said that no one can ever reach the knowledge of finding out who he / she really is unless he / she has gone through the personal journey towards the fulfillment of his / her goals. There are so many times in life when one may realize that his / her initial goals are not what he /she had hoped for or on the contrary became the beginning for the search of new, even wider goals.

The theme of search in Obama's memoir is built upon a double sided thematic core. Obama searches for his own identity while searching for the identity of his father, the ideal male which he was really never given the chance to see and get to know. Obama seems to have experienced the loss of his father long before his father's death.

So, searching for his father's origins is actually according to what Obama confesses in his memoir the best way to try and approach his father now he no longer lives between us.

Works cited

Obama, Barack, ' Dreams for my Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance',
Broadway Books (2004)