

An analysis of the poem "still i rise" essay sample

[Literature](#), [Poetry](#)



An Analysis Of The Poem “ Still I Rise” Essay Sample

I Rise While taking the class Women in Contemporary Literature we read, discussed, and analyzed a number of historical works, poems, and essays by women authors of the present and past. The work that impressed me, and touched my spirit the most was a poem written by Maya Angelou entitled, “ Still I Rise”. This poem is in essence an autobiography of, and personal extension of Ms. Angelou’s soul. Moreover, there are many lines, words, language choices, and word choices that demonstrate this poem’s autobiographical side. It is also an incredible journey in the life of a black woman. In almost every line of this fantastic work, you can find such illustrations.

For instance, in the first stanza of the poem Ms. Angelou states, “ You may write me down in history with your bitter, twisted lies, You may trod me in the very dirt, but still like dust, I’ll rise”|(Longman, 1223) This is a such a beautiful stanza because it is talking about all of the derogatory, inhumane, and degrading things that have been stereotyped, and told about the African-American woman throughout history. It is also shedding light on the power of the black woman by using rising like dust as a metaphor. Dust may be seen as this dirty object, but no matter how much you step on it, or try and brush it away, it stands tall and finds a way to escape and keep on going. A second instance of the poem’s autobiographical nature occurs in the second and third stanzas. Ms. Angelou writes, “ Does my sassiness upset you? Why are you beset with gloom? Cause I walk like I’ve got oil wells pumping in my living room”|(Longman, 1223)

Here the author is talking about her sense of pride and how she was questioned about her sense of dignity at some point in her life. Oil is a very expensive natural resource that is very precious, and sought after. By comparing her dignity and pride to an oil well, Ms. Angelou is saying that these things are important to her, that they cannot be purchased, and that those things are worth more than any material gift on this earth. "Just like hopes springing high" is a metaphor for her overcoming of the obstacles she has seen in her life. These very demonstrative points continue on throughout her poem.

In the fourth and fifth stanza Angelou narrates, "Did you want to see me broken? Bowed head and lowered eyes" Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines, diggin' in my own backyard (Longman, 1223). Here she is speaking about how people intend on her, and the black woman in general, on being depressed, lacking of self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-identity. Instead of seeing her with a smile on her face, people would rather see her with her head hung down because somehow they vision pride as power.