

# Forty acres essay



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The short poem “Forty Acres” by Derek Walcott, compares the heroic figures during the slave era to President Barack Obama.

Walcott’s poem is about a heroic figure in the African American community and how he overcame all obstacles and rose to power, much like President Obama. He discusses the stereotypical thoughts of the white Americans and how most deemed it impossible for blacks to achieve greatness. He also hints at the broken promise made to black people to have forty acres and a mule. This poem reveals many hardships black people had to face in order to be considered equal to the superior race.

After being freed from slavery, black people were promised to receive forty acres of land and a mule. This promise was made to help aid the newly freed slaves start out their own lives. This promise never became a reality. It was left to only be a broken promise that many African Americans still dwell on today. Though this promise was never given, African Americans still made progressions in making life better for themselves, therefore setting the stage for a black man to run this country.

In this poem, Walcott talks about a young black man that stands as a sort of heroic emblem in the black community. Despite what all other negative comments are said as he presses his way, he continues on. He ignores all the negativity and all the slander that others have to say. Walcott says The small plough continues on this lined page beyond the moaning ground, the lynching tree, the tornado’s black vengeance..(15-16).

In these lines Walcott makes a reference to the