

# Obamas experience as an african american

[History](#)



Obama grew up feeling frustration that came from the fact that his father was not a presence in his life and yet, he was being faced with a legacy of discrimination because of that same man's race. He chose the title *Dreams from My Father* to represent his father's influence on his own self. A black boy, whose father chose a country above his family, Obama came to understand that in order to gain 'freedom' from past history, he had to follow his father's ideals. He had to show everyone regardless of the consequences that despite having a slave past, he could every bit a success as any other person in society.

*Dreams from My Father* is the title of the book, for it was the dream of Obama's Kenyan father, to live in a society where racial discrimination did not exist and where economic power did not mean corrupt power. These are the same ideals that Obama lives for. We see this through his words, " All of my life, I carried a single image of my father, one that I .. tried to take as my own." (Obama 2004, p. 220) And what was that image It was " the father of my dreams, the man in my mother's stories, full of high-blown ideals. .." (p. 278) " It was into my father's image .. . that I'd packed all the attributes I sought in myself." " I did feel that there was something to prove to my father" in his efforts at political organizing. (p. 230)

Barack Obama like most African Americans struggled to understand his legacy of slavery. He needed to come to terms with his life experience in lieu of the experience of his race. He had to know why he struggled to be accepted in society as a human rather than be judged on the basis of his race. The problem was compounded by the rage he felt for coming from a people who were degraded for so long.

Making his journey to Kenya to visit his father's grave and coming to realize  
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his father's commitment to the people of his nation showed Obama that his duty lay in following the dreams of his father. It was his father's legacy to him. It was from Africa that the cycle of slavery started and created the situation in the US where a whole race was enslaved. Seeing his roots helped him realize that the struggle for liberation had to continue. He wrote, "... I felt a calmness wash over me. I felt the circle finally close" (429). This specifies that on seeing his father and grandfather's grave, both men who gave their lives to their country, Obama realized that he too had to follow the same path and make the circle of life start once again.

### Conclusion

African Americans are coming to terms with the past by reliving the past through autobiographical works and in doing so trying to explore their own lives. It is not because they want to show the others the havoc that was wrecked on their community rather it is to show themselves that what happened was not their fault and to live in a society where race does not matter, to them and to others. Obama wrote about his struggles as an individual but there are thousands of boys out there who will relate to his words and be inspired to live his dreams.