

WIELD WORDS AS YOUR WEAPON

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Language is powerful, it can do many things. Nothing can stop those who believe in this statement. Words can inspire, evoke emotion, and tell a story. When thinking of the contributions that black Canadians have made, I think of those who have both power and influence. This brings me back to the first statement. There are many people who utilize the power that language holds, but none do it quite like Lawrence Hill. His work shares knowledge through stories and tackles issues that black people have had to face in the past and present. We can learn not only from his work as an author but from his life experiences as well. The contributions he has made to our country and the world will be long-lasting as books live forever.

Lawrence Hill is an impressive person all aspects of his life. He has won countless well-deserved awards and put in many volunteer hours. He had a passion for sunning as a child and dreamed of being in the Olympics. Despite his efforts, he couldn't make it as a runner, but he found a new passion in writing. He did not let his spirit be broken for long. He found a new love, a love of literature. Many people can relate to trying your best at something but not achieving what you set out to do. Many see this as a failure and it can be devastating to their self-confidence. However what they don't realize is that sometimes you need to fail to realize your true talent. Lawrence Hill is an example of someone who found their calling after they thought it was lost. If he had it made as a runner, we would never have the incredible opportunity to learn from his writing.

Lawrence Hill is the author of ten novels. In his works he tackles issues of racism, identity, and belonging. Hill was born to a black father and white mother who are American immigrants. He drew inspiration from his parents work in the human rights movement. He has works of both fiction and nonfiction. He shares his gift by teaching undergraduate fiction writers and creative writers. It is important that he tackles tough issues in his work. Racism is still very much alive and if we want it to completely disappear it's something we need to talk about. It's a difficult topic because people like to believe that racism is a thing of the past. However, black people still it hard in this world in some cases and have to jump through more hoops. To tackle racism we need to inform people and show them different points of view. This is the only way anything can get better. Lawrence Hill tackles things head on and doesn't shy away which is what the world needs.

The Book of Negroes is a literary masterpiece that I've had the pleasure of reading, watching, and analyzing. It was adapted into a six-part television mini-series. It follows the story of Aminata Diallo, a woman who grew up during the transatlantic slave trade. It is not an easy piece to read, and it is an even harder thing to watch. Now this is in no way because of shoddy writing or inadequate directing. It is because Lawrence Hill holds nothing back and includes every possible detail. Despite being fiction it shows the try heartbreaking story of what Africans had to endure before slavery was abolished. It is important that we remember the worst parts of our history and recognize that they happened. We cannot let anything of this sort happen again and informing people of the terrors that innocent people faced will aid in keeping this world peaceful.

Language is powerful. Those who wield words as their weapon hold the most power on this Earth. Lawrence Hill is one of those people. We can learn from both his own life and his books. He has not only gifted this world with his talent but gifted us with knowledge and a deeper understanding of the struggles of black people in the past and present. Canada needs those who take charge and tackle important issues. Canada needs people like Lawrence Hill.

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...she advised youth to... be humble and compassionate, to be strong and to stand tall against the forces which threaten to silence a people.