



AFUA COOPER

BACKGROUND

Dr. **Afua Cooper** is a multi-award-winning and celebrated speaker, scholar, historian, author, poet, performer, and social and cultural commentator for organizations worldwide committed to building diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies.

In alignment with the recent global overtures to end racism, Dr. Cooper's mission is to end racism globally by helping organizations improve racial and ethnic justice in the workplace. She helps boards of directors set long-term strategies to become anti-racist organizations.

Recognizing the tremendous multi-disciplinary contributions Dr. Cooper has made globally, *Essence Magazine*, a premiere lifestyle, fashion, and beauty publication, named her as one of the **25 women who are shaping the world**. Based in New York City and first published in 1970, the magazine serves African-American women.

Dr. Cooper's expertise in and contributions to the arts, history, and education were additionally recognized when she was presented with the Nova Scotia Human Rights Award in 2015 from the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission (CANADA).

Additionally, Dr. Cooper served as Halifax's (CANADA) seventh Poet Laureate, a celebrated poet. She is the author of six books of poetry, including the critically acclaimed *Copper Woman and Other Poems* and the award-winning *Black Matters*. She has also produced two digital poetry recordings. Her poetry has a strong sense of memory, history, place, and spirituality.

Dr. Cooper has published two historical novels, which garnered Canadian and American awards. Her work in the creative arts has been recognized with the Premier of Ontario Award nomination for Excellence in the Arts, a Governor General's Award nomination, the Portia White Prize, Nova Scotia's highest award for artistic excellence., and internationally with the Beacon of Freedom Award awarded for her book *My Name is Phillis Wheatley*.

A founder of the Canadian Dub poetry movement, Dr. Cooper served as creative director of the Dub Poets Collective and was one of the organizers of several international dub poetry festivals.

Dr. Cooper holds a Ph.D. in Black Canadian history and the African Diaspora studies from the University of Toronto. Her expertise includes African Canadian history and culture, Black women's history, gender, slavery, and abolition.

Her award-winning research includes African-descended people and their culture across the globe. Her co-authored publication *We're Rooted Here, and They Can't Pull Us Up: Essays in African Canadian Women's History* won the Joseph Brant prize for the best history book.

Her ground-breaking book on Canadian slavery, *The Hanging of Angelique: The Untold Story of Slavery in Canada and the Burning of Old Montreal*, was nominated for the Governor General's Award (CANADA). The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) named Angelique one of Canada's top 100 books.

Dr. Cooper has curated and worked on eight exhibits: *The Underground Railroad*, *Next Stop Freedom*, *Enslaved Africans in Upper Canada*, and *The Transatlantic Slave Trade*.

As a result of her scholarship and praxis, Dr. Cooper was awarded a one-million-dollar grant from the Department of Canadian Heritage to direct the *A Black People's History of Canada* project. From 2011 to 2017, Dr. Cooper was the James Robinson Johnston Chair in Black Canadian Studies at Dalhousie University, Halifax (CANADA). Dr. Cooper is also the founder of the Black Canadian Studies Association, an organization that she chaired for ten years, and the Dalhousie Black Faculty and Staff Caucus.

Dr. Cooper is Canada's Representative on the UNESCO International Scientific Committee for the Slave Route Project.

Dr. Cooper also serves as a full professor at Dalhousie University's Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology (Halifax, CANADA) with cross-appointments in the Department of History and Gender and Women Studies in Halifax. At this institution, she also holds a prestigious Killam Research Chair.