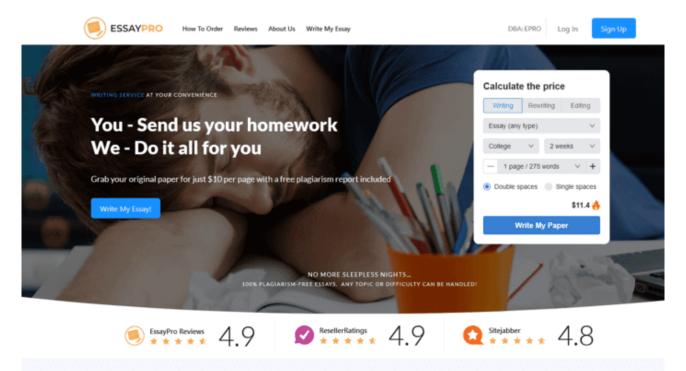
Richard Wright



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Richard Wright

"Whenever I thought of the essential bleakness of black life in America, I knew that Negroes had never been allowed to catch the full spirit of Western civilization, that they lived somehow in it but not of it. And when I brooded upon the cultural barrenness of black life, I wondered if clean, positive tenderness, love, honor, loyalty, and the capacity to remember were native with man. I asked myself if these human qualities were not fostered, won, struggled and suffered for, preserved in ritual from one generation to another." This passage written in Black Boy, the autobiography of Richard Wright shows the disadvantages of Black people in the 1930's. A man of many words, Richard Wrights is the father of the modern American black novel. Wright has constituted in his novels the social and economic inequities that were imposed in the 30's in hope of making a difference in the Black Community. His writing eventually led many black Americans to embrace the Communist Party.

Born on a plantation in Mississippi, Richard Wright grew up in an environment stricken in poverty. When Richard was five years old his father deserted the family. Richard's mother, a school teacher, did her best to support the family but her income was not enough

therefor Richard was often sent to an orphan asylum for various intervals of time. Just before Richard's tenth birthday his mother became paralyzed and moved in with relatives in Mississippi. At fifteen he began working in <u>Memphis</u> as a porter and <u>messenger</u>. It was around this age that Richard became thoroughly interested in reading and writing. Due to rules and regulations on segregation, Richard was unable to get some books that could only be found in the library for white people. F...

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...r them like he was know for his novels and autobiography.

Richard Wright, hero to the black American, was one of the first men to fight for equality among blacks and whites. In his writings, Richard expresses to white people what kind of hardships all young negroes go through and how this lifestyle affect their behavior. For it is our surroundings that often influence the way we react depending on the situation. After Wrights death may other novelists and authors were inspired by him and continued the fight for equality, among them James Baldwin, Ralph Ellison, Ann Petry, and Chester Himes. Although the final chapters of his life closed many years ago, Richard's hopes and dreams today remain an open book.

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