

## **Doreen Lawrence, Baroness Lawrence of Clarendon, OBE**



**Doreen Lawrence, Baroness Lawrence of Clarendon, OBE** is a British Jamaican campaigner and the mother of Stephen Lawrence, a black British teenager who was murdered in a racist attack in South East London in 1993.

She promoted reforms of the police service and founded the Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust. She was appointed OBE for "services to community relations" in 2003, and was created a Life Peer in 2013.

## **Doreen Lawrence's Biography:**

### **Early and personal life**

Doreen Delceita Lawrence was born in Jamaica in 1952. At the age of nine, she emigrated to England. She completed her education in south-east London, before becoming a bank worker. In 1972, she married Neville Lawrence. Their son Stephen was born in 1974, and Stuart was born in 1977. Georgina was born in 1982.

### **Murder of Stephen Lawrence**

Following the murder of their son Stephen in 1993, Doreen and Neville Lawrence claimed that the Metropolitan Police investigation was not being conducted in a professional manner, citing incompetence and racism as prime flaws.

In 1999, after years of campaigning a wide-ranging judicial inquiry was established to investigate the circumstances of Stephen Lawrence's death. The public inquiry was the subject of intense media interest which became international when it concluded that the Metropolitan Police was "institutionally racist" and that this was one of the primary causes of their failure to solve the case.

### **Public life**

In the aftermath of the inquiry, Lawrence continued to campaign for justice for her son as well as for other victims of racist crime. She has worked to secure further reforms of the police service. In 2003 she was awarded the OBE for services to community relations.

She founded the Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust to promote a positive community legacy in her son's name. Lawrence has been selected to sit on panels within the Home Office and the Police Service, and she is a member of both the board and the council of Liberty, the human rights organisation, as well as being a patron of hate crime charity Stop Hate UK.

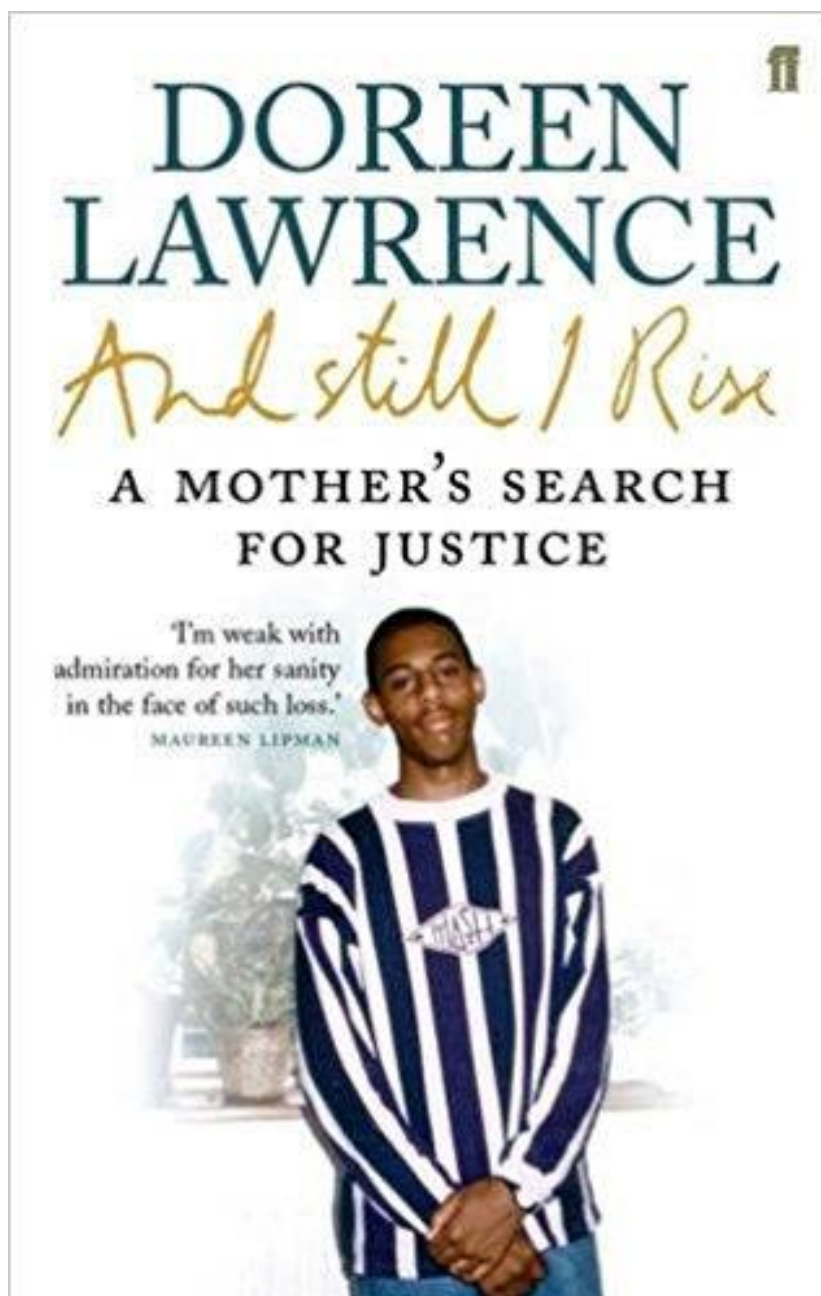
### **Recognition**

In October 2012, she received a Lifetime Achievement Award at the Pride of Britain Awards.

In April 2014, she was named as Britain's most influential woman in the BBC Woman's Hour power list.

Lawrence was elevated to the peerage as a Baroness, on 6 September 2013, and is formally styled *Baroness Lawrence of Clarendon*. She sits on the Labour benches in the House of Lords as a working peer.

She has been awarded honorary doctorates from the Open University and the University of West London, and became Chancellor of De Montfort University in Leicester in 2016.



Her fight for justice was not only for her son but to for all victims of racist crimes and through her work she has been able to help reform the police service.

Not only has she been the public face to stop racism, she also works with organisations to drive change from the inside, she sits on the panel of the Home Office and Police Service, is a member of both the board and council of Liberty and a patron of Stop Hate UK.

In addition, Doreen and her family founded the Stephen Lawrence charitable Trust to promote a positive community legacy in her son's name – she has taken the negative from the tragedy of losing her son and has turned it into a positive image of hope for change and equality in the UK.



Theresa May's statement sums up how impactful Doreen Lawrence has been in the fight for justice and equality:

"Baroness Lawrence had been faced by a "terrible tragedy", yet picked herself up and carried on fighting to ensure that justice could be done. What is most striking about this woman is the great strength that she has shown over decades – strength to carry on, to keep on going, even in the most difficult times when all seemed impossible,"

"Also striking is the persistence that she has shown, because she has never given up. And finally, what is most impressive about this game-changer is that throughout it all, over the years, despite blow after blow, she has dealt with everything with absolute dignity." Theresa May

