

AUDRE LORDE – THE BERLIN YEARS | 1984 BIS | 1992

A Film by Dagmar Schultz

STUDY GUIDE

The following study guide to the film is mainly designed for secondary schools, especially for teachers of English, Literature, History, Politics, Sociology, African American Studies, Women and Gender Studies and interdisciplinary courses. Cultural workers and political activists may find it useful as well.

ABOUT THE FILM

Before viewing:

- What associations do you have with the word ‘black’?
- Think about these three statements that are made in the film:
 - Poetry is the most subversive form of language.
 - White people don’t allow you to forget that you are black.
 - My silences had not protected me. Your silences will not protect you.



After viewing:



- What do you think about the structure of this documentary?
- What have you learned about the impact Audre Lorde’s personality and poetry had on her different audiences in Germany.
- What have you found out in the film about Afro-German people?
- How would you define the main message of the film?
- Give examples how the film’s message is enhanced by the use of archival film footage, montage, sound, music, images etc.

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COMMENT on Audre Lorde's statements:

I speak as an African-American woman, a lesbian, a poet, a warrior, a mother, a cancer Survivor.

Let us be ourselves as we define us (...). If you do not identify yourself, someone will and it will always be to your detriment (...)

The white women's movement must accept antiracism and work against anti-semitism as central to the women's movement or it will die.

Racism is a problem of the racist, racism is a white problem. We suffer from it, but the corrosive effects of racism are in the people who practice it (...)

We share an earth and we need each other, but we are not each other, we are different. I can know and respect your differences; you must know and respect mine. That is the only way we can work together.

Power is relative, but it is real. And if you do not use whatever power you possess it will be used against you.



ABOUT AUDRE LORDE

Conduct an Internet Research to find out more about Audre Lorde. *A Litany for Survival: The Life and Work of Audre Lorde*: http://truelives.org/pg_alitanyforsurvival.html

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BOOKS REFERRED TO IN THE FILM AND SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

The Cancer Journals. San Francisco: Spinsters Ink, 1982.

Zami – a new spelling of my name. Trumansburg, N.Y.: Crossing Press, 1982.

Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches. Crossing Press, 1984.

A Burst of Light. Essays by Audre Lorde. Ithaca, N.Y.: Firebrand Books, 1988.

The Marvelous Arithmetics of Distance. Poems 1987 – 1992. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1993.

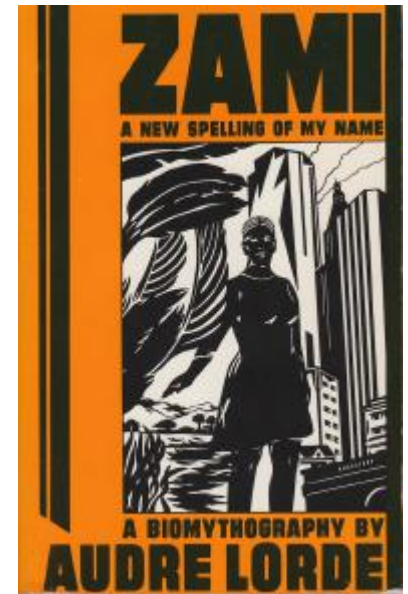
Undersong: Chosen Poems Old and New. New York: W.W. Norton, 1992.

The Audre Lorde Compendium. Essays, Speeches and Journals. Introduced by Alice Walker. London: Pandora, An imprint of Harper Collins, 1996.

The collected Poems of Audre Lorde. New York: W.W. Norton, 1997.

Conversations with Audre Lorde. Ed. Joan Wylie Hall, Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2004.

I Am Your Sister. Collected and unpublished writings of Audre Lorde. Eds. Rudolph P. Byrd, Johnetta Betsch Cole, Beverly Guy-Sheftall. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.



ABOUT THE PRODUCER

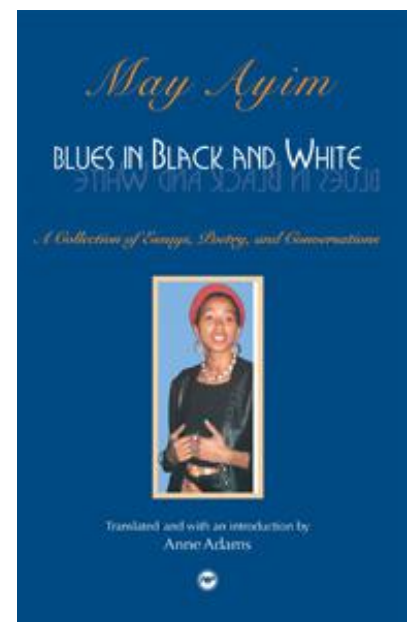
Consult www.dagmarschultz.com and www.audrelorde-theberlinyears.com

ABOUT AFRO-GERMANS

What do you associate with this definition?

Find out more: <http://www.isdonline.de>

Hope in My Heart: The May Ayim Story: <http://www.twn.org/catalog/pages/capage.aspx?rec=1015&card=price>



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A SELECTION OF FURTHER READINGS

Showing Our Colors. Afro-German Women Speak out. Edited by May Opitz, Katharina Oguntoye & Dagmar Schultz. Translated by Anne V. Adams. Foreword by Audre Lorde. The University of Massachusetts Press, 1992.

Marion Kraft. *The African Continuum and Contemporary African-American Women Writers.* With a chapter on Audre Lorde. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang GmbH, Europäischer Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1995.

Ika Huegel-Marshall. *Invisible Woman – Growing Up Black in Germany.* Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang GmbH, *Europäischer Verlag der Wissenschaften*, 2002.

Joan Wylie Hall. *Conversations with Audre Lorde.* Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2004.

PROJECTS

Organize a film-viewing event at your institution.

This study guide may be useful for structuring it.

Organize a panel discussion about the issues raised in the film *Audre Lorde – The Berlin Years*.

Discuss further ideas in groups at your institution.

