

POWERFUL & DANGEROUS: THE LIFE, TIMES, AND THEORY OF AUDRE LORDE

GNDR_ST 382



This course will explore the life and work of poet and Black feminist Audre Lorde, born in 1934 to Caribbean immigrants and raised in Harlem, New York. One of the most important figures in the early Black feminist community, Lorde's work continues to impact feminist activism and scholarship. She teaches us that poetry is the "skeleton

architecture of our lives," that "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house" and "our silence will not protect us," and that the erotic is a source of female power. But she was also a product of her times, and her life and experiences profoundly influenced her work. In this class we will ask how Lorde was shaped by events and movements like the Great Migration, the Stonewall Riots, Second Wave feminism and Womanism, and the Reagan-Bush Era. We will dive deeply into her poetry, essays, journals, and "biomythography." Engaging both her "canonical" texts and her less well-known works, we will explore the ways in which Lorde—through her writing, her activism, her "Blackness as well as [her] womanness," her lesbian sexuality, her Pan-African spirituality, and her struggles to survive breast cancer—shaped and changed the world around her.

Courtney Rabada

M/W 2:00-3:20pm
Kresge 1-525