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Nature as Narrative: Audre Lorde's Confluence of Environment, Identity, and Activism

Yasmin Chaudhuri *
Assistant Professor & Head,
Department of English
Sister Nibedita Government General Degree College for Girls
Kolkata, West Bengal. Best

Abstract

This research paper delves into the nuanced portrayal of nature in the writings of Audre Lorde, situating her work within the broader spectrum of Black women's environmental literature. Lorde, a seminal figure in twentieth-century literature, uniquely integrates the natural world within her exploration of race, gender, and sexuality, challenging the conventional boundaries of nature writing. Unlike the traditional view of nature as a realm separate from human or societal issues, Lorde's poetry and prose embody nature as a deeply intertwined element of personal and collective identity and struggle. Through a close reading of Lorde's selected poems and speeches, this study aims to unravel how Lorde's use of natural imagery and metaphors articulates a vision of nature that is inherently political and reflective of the Black female experience. The paper seeks to answer how Audre Lorde's portrayal of nature contributes to a redefinition of environmental literature, emphasizing the inseparability of ecological concerns from the fabric of racial and gender identity. In doing so, it contributes to the ongoing discourse on the intersectionality of environmental justice, highlighting the significance of Black women's voices in shaping the nature writing genre.

Keywords: *Audre Lorde, Black women writers, nature writing, intersectionality, ecological justice.*

Introduction: Black Nature Poetry

The early twentieth century witnessed America emerge as a world industrial power based on quick technological advancement. The period balanced technological progress with an increasing sense of natural beauty appreciation, evidenced by attempts to maintain unspoiled regions and create National Parks. The twentieth century was characterized by a dual relationship between technological advancement and environmental awareness, with Americans employing new technologies to redefine them in the natural order. This era proved

* Author: Yasmin Chaudhuri
Email: yasmin@snggdcg.ac.in
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that technological advancement and an interest in nature could exist simultaneously, forging a new American identity.

Even though, the transition from rural to urban life has resulted in a loss of connection with nature, but nature continues to be a source of comfort and inspiration. Aldo Leopold, an American ecologist, brought forth new environmental ethics, advocating for a perception of humans as part of a larger ecological community. In this context, we find African American poets frequently combining historical, political, and socioeconomic analysis with nature writing, providing a more nuanced vision of the natural world.

Camille T. Dungy in the preface of *Black Nature*, a collection of poems by Black poets, writes about the intersection of Black feminism and nature as it relates to how Black women poets deploy nature imagery as a way of writing about social and racial issues.

Black nature poetry stands in stark contrast to mainstream nature poetry in thematic concern, cultural history, and historical experience. Nature poetry, by poets like Wordsworth and Thoreau, idealizes and sentimentalizes nature as a site for consolation, inspiration, and religious rebirth. Nature within these poems is most typically a calm and dignified backdrop for personal contemplation and aesthetic appreciation. Black nature poetry, on the other hand, is built on a context of struggle, survival, and resilience. Camille T. Dungy identifies how Western nature poetry marginalizes African American voices. She advocates a more ecocritical and ecopoetic inclusive nature writing (3). Nature is anything but an idyllic setting for most Black poets but a complex landscape entwined with memory of exploitation, violence, and survival. Black nature poetry embraces the double reality of nature as both the ground of oppression and source of resistance and identity. Nature is depicted with themes of fear, anger, and historical trauma, and often as a witness to the brutal history of slavery and segregation. In addition, Black nature poetry tends to express the deep bond of African Americans to the land and explores the reclamation and empowerment themes of the Black community. The Black nature writing genre not only challenges the historical and current exploitation of human beings and the environment but also recuperates nature as a central component of Black identity and heritage, making it a vibrant space for cultural and individual affirmation (Dungy 7).

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Audre Lorde- Nature, Survival and Identity

Audre Lorde, a prominent African American lesbian feminist literary critic and poet, was born in Harlem and studied at the National University of Mexico, Hunter College, and Columbia University. She initially came into prominence with her poetry, such as early poems written under the pen name Rey Domini, and her first book The First Cities in 1968. Lorde went on writing and teaching, becoming a professor at Hunter College until her death in 1992. Her poetry, addresses issues of love, anger, racism, sexism, and homophobia. Not only are her poems, Lorde's prose works are also remarkable. Lorde's prose works, such as *The Cancer Journals* and *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*, analyzes her own experiences with cancer, her emerging lesbian self, and the intersection of race, gender, and sexuality. Her critical writings in *Sister Outsider* and *A Burst of Light* have had a profoundly significant impact on Black feminism. Lorde received many grants, including the National Endowment for the Arts, and was shortlisted for the National Book Award for Poetry in 1974 for From a Land Where Other People Live.

Audre Lorde's poetry exquisitely interweaves ecological views with reflections on society. Her poetry is a potent resource that bridges the physical soil of the planet and the figurative soil of the problems of society. Lorde's ecological poems go much beyond the earthy terrain, exploring themes well beyond nature itself. She incorporates nature to respond to civil and social wrongs, speaking for the minorities, struggling in America. One of the most notable themes in Lorde's poetry is the use of Earth's elements to represent these injustices, using the changing seasons to symbolize the breakdown of rights and equality. She doesn't hesitate to mention the brutal acts of violence, like lynchings, that took place in natural environments. Another theme is the reclaiming of nature, in harmony with the reclaiming of equality. Lorde exemplifies that the threat to nature is similar to the threat to humanity, and as nature recedes, so does human hope and spirit. In her poems, Lorde demonstrates that nature is not only a source of inspiration but also a reflection of society's injustices. The depiction of nature by Lorde is reflective of her defiance against exploitation and desire to reclaim her voice and identity.

When Audre Lorde's first book of poems was published, her publisher, Dudley Randall, immediately made it clear that Audre Lorde was not a nature poet. This comment by her publisher echoes the need to distinguish her writing from nature poetry in its conventional form. Conventional American nature literature seems oblivious to the bitter conditions of oppression.

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It prefers to idealize the American geography, praising its loveliness and comfort at the expense of remembering the historical condition of the earth and the eviction of countless populations from it. Conversely, Lorde's poems do not merely present nature; they entwine it with the experiences of marginalized individuals and emphasize the social and civil injustices that have conditioned their interaction with nature. Her poems refute the idea that poetry about nature has to be politically sanitized, instead employing the natural world as a vehicle to examine more profound issues of society. By doing so, Lorde redefines the genre, making it a powerful tool for social commentary and activism. When Audre Lorde's publisher stated that she was not a nature writer, he justified his argument by saying that Lorde's poems did not focus on nature but on feelings and relationships, signaling the common understanding that the concepts were mutually exclusive. However, Lorde understood that writing about nature inherently involves writing about feelings and relationships. For Lorde, exploring nature was a way to delve into the complexities of human emotions and connections, demonstrating that the natural world and our inner experiences are profoundly interconnected.

In one of her poems, 'Second Spring', Audre Lorde creates a vivid picture that relates to the themes of social reflection and ecological views. Lorde describes the impossibility of having another spring, indicating that the "dark ages" have now arrived. In the poem, the image of flowers in full bloom and the sun shining represents the purity and innocence of a past spring. The juxtaposition of the land "[b]ecome[ing] a vast appalling wilderness"(17) is used to emphasize the cruel realities and injustices that have cast a shadow over the hope and rebirth that spring has long been associated with.

> We have no passions left to love the spring
>
> Who had suffered autumn as we did, alone
>
> Walking through dominions of a browning laughter
>
> Carrying our loneliness our loving and our grief. (Collected Poems 1-4)

Lorde's description of a lost spring highlights the decay of rights and equality, which parallels the loss of nature and humankind. Lorde emphasizes her overall point that the situation of nature represents the situation of society through this poem, stressing the interdependency of environmental decay and social wrongs.

In African American folk culture, alienation has been articulated through identification with low-valued nature creatures like the fox, coyote, and vermin of the kind usually known as rats

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and roaches. Identification with the hated and neglected creatures of the earth has a two-pronged impact in the writings of Lorde. She not only illustrates how the blacks in society are treated like the pests and other abandoned beasts of the world but also in using the imagery of the pests, she illustrates how the blacks withstand every hardship in an attempt to survive.

Lorde's ‘The Brown Menace or Poem to the Survival of Roaches’ is itself an exemplar of this specific genre of African American nature poetry. In the poem, Audre Lorde traverses the cruel alienation of African Americans by invoking a strong comparison with a very despicable pest—the brown roach. This eco-poetic connection is noted in the survival and resilience of the roach and the survival of oppressed people under institutional oppression. Lorde starts with, "Call me your deepest urge toward survival," redefining survival in terms of the roach's resilience. Celebrated for enduring all odds, roaches represent African Americans enduring adversity. In "Call me and my brothers and sisters in the pungent odor of your denial," she addresses the universal denial and racism to which African Americans are subjected and makes a parallel with the way society despises roaches. The line, "Call me roach and presumptuous monster on your pillow white," poignantly touches on the colour line, where the white pillow stands for white society and the roach for African Americans.

The term "nightmare" emphasizes the face of African Americans as a discomforting presence within a white environment. "Your itch to destroy the indestructible part of yourself," is a suggestion of internalized violence within the African American community due to institutional oppression. Throughout the poem, the repetition of "call me" emphasizes the imposed identity and othering. “In the most detestable shape/ you can become/ friend of your image/ within me/ I am you", Lorde calls the reader to see the common human in the veneer of differences. The roach symbolism of scurrying around painted crevices in their dreams brings to mind the unwanted and persistent intruder that society attempts to eliminate. "You create to allow me into your kitchens, your terror-filled midnights, your noon values, in your deepest hiding places, with hate," addresses the unwilling acceptance of African Americans into spaces where they are not actually being accepted, to the ubiquity of anti-blackness. The line, "You learn to honor me by imitation," insinuates that beneath the denial lies a secondary imitation or adoption of black culture by white society. "As I change – by your grasping concerns, by your kitchen battles, and your toxic denial – to live," illustrates the African Americans' struggle to live and adapt to constant exploitation and denial of equality by white society. The final repetition, "To survive, survive," sums up the theme of the poem: the tireless struggle for

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survival and acceptance in a discriminatory world. With her imagery of roaches, Lorde's poem highlights the strength and indomitable will of African Americans, showing how their struggle for survival against institutional racism is paralleled by the roach's persistence in an unfriendly world. Lorde learns how to survive from the roaches in a world where she writes "[g]rowing up Fat Black Female and almost blind in America takes so much surviving that you have to learn from it or die" (The Cancer Journals 32).

Lorde's lesson of survival in a discriminatory society also becomes apparent in her poem 'Afterimages', which is "one of the clear examples of Lorde's nature reclamation poems"(Nagah). There is reclamation of nature in this poem using dialogic imagery, as the poet identifies with one of the smallest but hardest creatures of nature: the dragonfish. The dragonfish, far from being beautiful and existing on very little, reflects the poet herself, who, excluded by mainstream American beauty standards, is able to exist on very little. Lorde is the dragonfish in her persistent and greedy nature. The burden of recalled pains causes her to "wade through summer ghosts," turning her into a dragonfish. Her outrage sustains her existence in her socially clumsy status, as does the dragonfish endure in its inhospitable habitat.

In her poem 'Coal,' Audre Lorde describes and radiates her Black womanhood, utilizing the metaphor of coal to impart a strong voice to all African Americans. Though coal may first present itself as a monochromatic and lackluster material, Lorde transforms it into a representation of activism and self-acceptance. She emphasizes inner strength and beauty that are all too often taken for granted, and thus coal becomes a rich symbol of strength and empowerment in the face of oppression. In the poem, Lorde reclaims herself and turns a refusal of the societal expectations, illustrating that even the subtlest things can be of profound meaning and have power for transformation.

Lorde's work as a lesbian poet is characterized by the thorough examination of the intersections of gender, sexuality, and race. She never avoided the complexity and challenges of being a Black lesbian, frequently meeting the social and personal barriers of this identity directly in her poetry. Lorde's poetry contains the political and personal nature of lesbian love, portraying it as both a personal sanctuary and a defiant act of resistance against hegemonic regimes. Her writing always celebrates the passion and beauty of lesbian love, counter to dominant discourses that silence or diminish queer love. In 'Love Poem,' Lorde enthusiastically commemorates women's physical and emotional closeness in all its ugliness and sincerity,

transgressing the heteronormative limits of love poetry. Lorde uses nature imagery in ‘Love Poem’ to bring out the natural and intrinsic nature of the lesbian experience of the speaker, framing it as something lovely and natural in life. By equating the landscape to the female body, she brings out the point that lesbian love is as natural and central as are the forces of nature. This approach not only romanticizes the encounter but also naturalizes and legitimates same-sex love, transgressing social prohibitions. The mountain, valley, forest, and honey imagery evokes a sense of timelessness and implies that queer love is not just natural but also enduring and central to human nature. The poem begins with a forceful imperative, "Speak earth and bless me with what is richest" expressing the speaker's assurance. Lorde uses imagery of topography to symbolize the feminine body, i.e., "rigid as mountains // spread over a valley // carved out by the mouth of rain", paralleling "mountains" and "valley" with breasts and genitalia. In the second stanza, Lorde employs descriptive language in describing a sexual encounter, starting with "And I knew when I entered her…", illustrating penetration. She continues to employ nature terms like "forests hollow" and "honey flowed", symbolizing the female genitals and vaginal discharge, to assert that lesbianism is natural. As the poem goes on, language itself is raw, with examples like "impaled on a lance of tongues // on the tips of her breast on her navel // and my breath // howling into her entrances". ‘Love Poem’ is brutally honest and a stunning portrait of Audre Lorde's relationships with women. Her application of natural imagery to describe the female body is an overall metaphor, often used within black feminism in order to consecrate women's bodies or their sisterhood. However, Lorde applies the metaphor to her female lovers, demonstrating how they "bless [her] with what is richest." Rather than focusing on herself, she indicates the grandeur of her partners' bodies. This intertwining of race, gender, and sexuality is a recurrent theme in the work of Lorde. Speaking in ‘Who Said It Was Simple,’ she says-

> But I who am bound by my mirror
>
> as well as my bed
>
> see causes in colour
>
> as well as sex (Collected Poems 12-15)

The above lines emphasize how she defines herself through these intersecting variables of gender,race, class and sexuality. Lorde foregrounds sexuality, race, and gender as themes of her work, weaving them into her powerful and evocative poetry.

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In 'Every Traveler Has One Vermont Poem,' Audre Lorde uses nature imagery to compare human experiences and natural forces, highlighting how racism limits the use of the natural world by marginalized groups. Through personification, tone, and title, Lorde argues that while nature offers a haven from human racism, it also reflects the boundaries established by the same racism. Lorde anthropomorphizes nature to indicate its indifference to human life, suggesting that nature is not susceptible to cultural ailments like racism. The narrator portrays natural objects at the beginning of the poem as "hid[ing] a longing or confession," representing nature as a sacred refuge where she can entrust her secret. Similarly, the phrase "tree mosses point the way home" gives nature human-like qualities as a protector of peace, safety, and comfort. This personification makes nature a refuge for the narrator, a complete contrast to the human racism highlighted later in the poem. The most effective example of personification is when Lorde says "sneeze-weed and ox-eye daisies/not caring I am a stranger/ making a living choice". She highlights nature's lack of concern for her identity and implies that in nature she can momentarily escape the social biases that frame her human life. This flight, though, is limited and transient, since the larger cultural reality of racism continues to be inescapable. The title ‘Every Traveler Has One Vermont Poem’ is also noteworthy, suggesting a universality of experience on the part of tourists who visit Vermont in quest of peace in Vermont's landscape. But the speaker's own experiences are especially distinctive, as they are marred by the widespread racism which even the lovely Vermont cannot hide. This is to say that from her position of marginality in society, she is not given the same unspoiled access to nature as other tourists. She is therefore unable to write that "one Vermont poem" at the cost of what she had.

In her use of natural imagery, Lorde makes a strong statement that the world of nature, comforting as it is, also illustrates the social barriers which exclude the full presence of outsiders' access to its beauty and tranquility. In her writings, Lorde depicts nature not as a background but as a co-participant in the battle for justice and self-definition.

Adure Lorde, Nature and American Cancer

Lorde's Cancer Journals also critique the destructive impact of economic systems and industries on her body. Lorde's text shows the foolishness of seeking happiness in the face of environmental degradation, as evident in her description of her mastectomy and recapture of sexual pleasure and identity. Lorde describes her alienation as a result of aggressive environmental conditions in The Cancer Journals, critiquing the dominant culture's search for

happiness in the face of environmental degradation. She states, "The notion that happiness can protect us from the outcome of our environmental craziness is a myth promulgated by our enemies to kill us"(The Cancer Journals 75). This is also built on in "Restoration: A Memorial," where Lorde remodels home and happiness in terms of relationships with nature and loved ones as based on her conviction that restoration is about redefining terms and bonds (Manigault-Bryant). The exchange between Lorde and Chawla in 1984 unveils her understanding of nature entwined in the relentless rhythm of birth and death, as she perceives herself surrounded by an erotic and maternal power (Conversations with Audre Lorde 115). Audre Lorde's description of nature and environmental status highlights her subjective experience of estrangement caused by "man-made" environmental destruction (Hume). Her poetry "Restoration: A Memorial" disapproves of the destructive power of economic systems and industries upon her home. Lorde's "queer restoration poetics" (Hume) allows her to restore an idea of home and happiness via associations with the natural environment and her intimates, through acknowledging vulnerability and unpredictability in life. Lorde's restoration poetics agrees with scientific ecological restoration theories, recognizing the unpredictability and complexity of ecosystems. Lorde's methodology is analogous to current ecological thought, rejecting linear models of recovery and the acknowledgment of complex interplay of physical, biological, and social forces (Hume). Lorde can be situated within a larger material feminist context, tracing how Black feminists such as Lorde have integrated material and sociopolitical forces into their projects for many years. Lorde's environmental justice text blends biological, cultural, and historical insights to conclude that genuine restoration could entail accepting unconventional ideas of home and happiness. Lorde's poetry is a historical record but also a catalyst for change. It shows that reading her work through the filter of environmental justice opens up the continued applicability and relevance of her feminist and ecological understanding, contributing to the establishment of a broader and equitable interpretation of nature and home(Hume). Hence, the comparisons between Lorde's restoration poetics and modern ecological theories, emphasizes the unpredictable, nonlinear process of ecological restoration. This is in line with Lorde's attitude towards uncertainties of life and the interrelatedness of physical, biological, and social forces. Lorde's writings also synthesize material and sociopolitical views, a characteristic appreciated by contemporary material feminisms. In her diaries, Lorde elaborates on the environmental factors behind her illness, labeling cancer as a metaphor to point out the devastating effect of neocolonial industries on nature (Manigault-Bryant).

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Lorde denounces the exploitative profit-making because it was noticeable when the Hess Oil Corporation had to be shielded by the military while assisting in relief during Hurricane Hugo. She narrates that the Hurricane Hugo was an awful natural tragedy but nature has a healing quality. It is the artificial substances that are pumped into her like festering tumors that become repulsive without perpetual care In her poetry and throughout her diary entries, cancer represents both her own disease and the larger environmental and political illnesses caused by greed (Manigault-Bryant). In "The American Cancer Society," Audre Lorde graphically describes the structural devastation of nature and the intense pain of Black people through a harsh critique of consumer culture and ecological degradation. She describes how corporate and industrial activities, fueled by profit instead of sustainability, exploit and injure both the environment and marginalized communities. The image of her son excavating "Con Edison General Motors Garbage Disposal" from his nose as he observes an anti-smoking commercial reinforces the ubiquitous nature of industrial pollution and the empty motions of public health initiatives that overlook more profound, systemic problems. Lorde emphasizes the subtle ways in which the "american cancer" acts, not only through blatant risks such as smoking, but through the insidious, pervasive invasion of noxious products into everyday life. Citing "cigarettes," "moon-walks," and "capsules," she attacks the value placed on technological progress and consumer items over the health of individuals and the earth. The poem intimates that such products, from frozen coffee to depilatories, are signs of a wider environmental and social deterioration. They are signs of the commercialization of nature and human needs and the reduction of natural and human aspects to consumable commodities. Lorde is highlighting the targeted victimization of Black people by these forces of destruction. The use of the words "Black women" and "Black People" acquiring "human qualities" by consuming dangerous products demonstrates the racist, exploitative aspects of consumer culture. She is critical of the American Cancer Society trying to offload its symbols onto Black people, suggesting that these symbols, once linked with whiteness and privilege, are so poisonous and devoid of meaning that they now get dumped onto marginalized groups. Lorde's poem articulately states that nature's destruction and Black people's oppression are closely connected, both rooted in capitalist society's exploitative machinery. The "american cancer" is seen as an omnipotent force, destroying the environment, health, and dignity, and her poetry calls for examination of and opposition to these intertwined forms of oppression Audre Lorde examined profound social and environmental injustices that are causative of health inequalities.

She narrates in "The Cancer Journals" ecological degradation hidden in the bodies of post-mastectomy women and technological and military interventions exacerbating natural disasters.

Her narrative lays bare the dialectical dance of racial capitalism and ecological degradation and how these forces hastened her death and still determine the Global South. She also goes on writing about long-term consequences of environmental and racial injustices in her life's body of work. In The Cancer Journals, she wrote of how poor, marginalized groups of people experience greater than disproportionately elevated exposure to environmental carcinogenic pollutants compared to their affluent counterparts. The intersection class-gender-race was displayed by the articulation of Lorde as an exhibition of institutionally entrenched injustices cumulatively focusing the susceptibility of certain groups towards the environment. In addition to her critique of ecological injustices, Lorde also critiqued cultural norms for women's natural bodies, i.e., breast cancer and treatment. She strongly disagreed with the white, heteronormative presumptions that a woman's body must be reconstructed to its preoperative state with breast forms or reconstructive surgery following a mastectomy. Lorde argued that such ideals only replicated a thin and repressive articulation of female beauty, one which fails to respect the multiple experience and liberty of women. Lorde's own struggle with breast cancer and mastectomy contributed to her protest. She decided not to wear a breast prosthesis, challenging the injunction that she conform to normalcy and femininity norms imposed by society. Instead, she taught body acceptance as it is, loving the changes caused by illness and surgery as a part of the self, rather than something to be hidden or covered up. This position was a revolutionary claim of bodily autonomy and self-acceptance in response to the medical and cultural forces that so frequently value appearance at the expense of the individual's sense of self and health. Her paintings illustrate the ways in which military and industrial forces break and de-balance nature, alienating women from our bodies and soul power. We have been conditioned to look at our bodies as if only thinking about how we appear to other people and feel to them, not how they feel to us, and how we would like to utilize them. We are bombarded by media images depicting women as essentially ornamental consumer machines, endlessly fighting against widespread decay. (Take your daily vitamins and he may keep you, if only you don't forget to whiten your teeth, conceal your odors, dye your gray hair and iron out your lines.) As women, we struggle against this depersonalization daily, this compulsion toward the

translation of one's own self-perception into a media idealization of what could gratify male demand (The Cancer Journals 51)

In her writings, Lorde implored the public to redefine beauty and health as broader, inclusive, and valid for all women, particularly the marginalized ones. Her writing remains influential to date, triggering discussions regarding body image, health disparities, and how social expectations may injure or heal. Through an exploration of these problems, Lorde not only called for personal empowerment but also institutional change, challenging society to accept and destroy the systems that sustain injustice and inequity.

Audre Lorde and Collective Action

Audre Lorde discusses nature and the environment almost exclusively in the context of social and political conflict. Lorde compares the U.S. invasion of St. Croix to that of Grenada, stressing the racial and imperialist bases of the moves. Lorde is critical of the presentation of Black troops in Grenada as an attempt to conceal U.S. imperialist policy through manipulation of racial iconography. She poses the question, "How do we ever forget young black American soldiers. bayonets out, in front of a hut in Grenville, Grenada?"('Conference Keynote Address '6).This highlights her more general criticism of the ways in which racial and environmental injustices are inseparable. She traces the degradation and exploitation of land to the oppression of marginalized communities, especially women of colour. Lorde emphasizes how imperialist and colonial operations not only dispossessed individuals of their land but also spoiled and abused these natural resources. She stresses the significance of reclaiming and defending the land as part of the general fight for justice and survival. Lorde reminisces about her travels and encounters with black women all over the world, observing the shared experiences of their campaigns against environmental and social injustices. She speaks of the resistance and reclamation struggles of many communities, like the Afro-German women and the Aboriginal women in Australia, who struggle against historical and continued exploitation. Lorde's analysis highlights the interconnectedness of social justice and environmental justice.

In traveling I came into contact with black women all over the earth. Pacific Island women, the Kanak women in struggle in New Caledonia, Maori women of Aotearoa, New Zealand. I marched with black Australians, the Koori women of Melbourne, in a land rights march, the women of Angola, and South Africa, out of their countries, and still in battle. And what I found, besides the particular differences of our struggles, was also a great similarity - the origins of

our oppressions are the same. It was very affirming to see all over the world women of color rising up and demanding - "You took our land, you didn't pay for it, you messed it up, polluted it, misused it, now give it back" ('Conference Keynote Address' 7)

In her various poems, journal entries and speeches, Lorde has demanded a combined response to address competing problems of environmental destruction and racial discrimination, challenging black women to employ their power and resources to resource global liberation movements. In connecting the struggle for environmental justice to the wider struggle for human rights, Lorde emphasizes the central position that land and nature occupy in ensuring the survival and empowerment of oppressed people.Lorde writes about environmental injustice and survival, illustrating how Black feminists have long taken these forces into account. Lorde's body of works collectively calls forth for environmental protection.

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