



June Jordan (1936-2002)

Who is June Jordan?

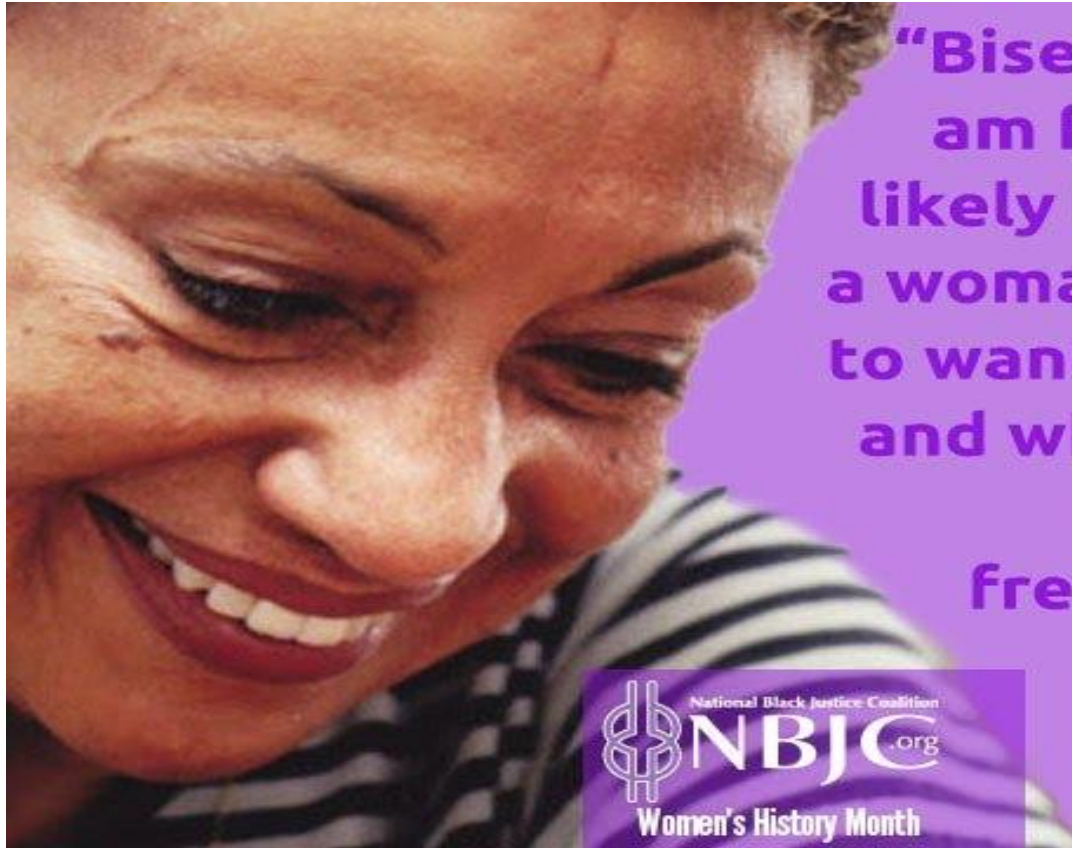


June Jordan

Writer, Activist,
Voice for Liberation



RADCLIFFE INSTITUTE
FOR ADVANCED STUDY
HARVARD UNIVERSITY



“Bisexuality means I am free and I am as likely to want to love a woman as I am likely to want to love a man, and what about that? Isn’t that what freedom implies?”



**June Jordan
Writer/Activist, 1936 – 2002**

“Bisexuals are people who acknowledge in themselves the potential to be attracted – romantically and/or sexually – to people of more than one sex and/or gender, not necessarily at the same time, not necessarily in the same way, and not necessarily to the same degree.” – Robyn Ochs

Black bisexual Icon: June Jordan



**June Jordan, Alice Walker,
Lucille Clifton, and Audre
Lorde together at the 1979
Phyllis Wheatley Poetry
Festival**

In 1991, black bisexual theorist and poet June Jordan called the bisexual movement a "**mandate for revolutionary Americans** planning to make it into the twenty-first century on the **basis of the heart**, on the basis of **an honest human body, consecrated to every struggle** for justice, every struggle for equality, every struggle for freedom".



June Jordan was born in Harlem in 1936 and grew up in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn. Poet, activist, teacher, and essayist, she was a prolific, passionate and influential voice for liberation. June Jordan, who died in 2002, lived and wrote on the frontlines of American poetry, political vision and moral witness.

"Jordan makes us think of Akhmatova, of Neruda. She is among the bravest of us, the most outraged. She feels for all. She is the universal poet."

--Alice Walker

"Whatever her theme or mode, June Jordan continually delineates the conditions of survival—of the body, and mind, and the heart."

--Adrienne Rich

"In political journalism that cuts like razors, in essays that blast the darkness of confusion with relentless light; in poetry that looks as closely into lilac buds as into death's mouth....she has comforted, explained, described, wrestled with, taught and made us laugh out loud before we wept...I am talking about a span of forty years of tireless activism coupled with and fueled by flawless art."

--Toni Morrison

Life as Activism, published in February 2014 by Litwin Books and edited by Stacy Russo, is the first complete collection of the columns June wrote for the *Progressive Magazine* (from 1989 to 2001). This beautiful new book comes with a foreword by Angela Davis and a preface by Matthew Rothschild.

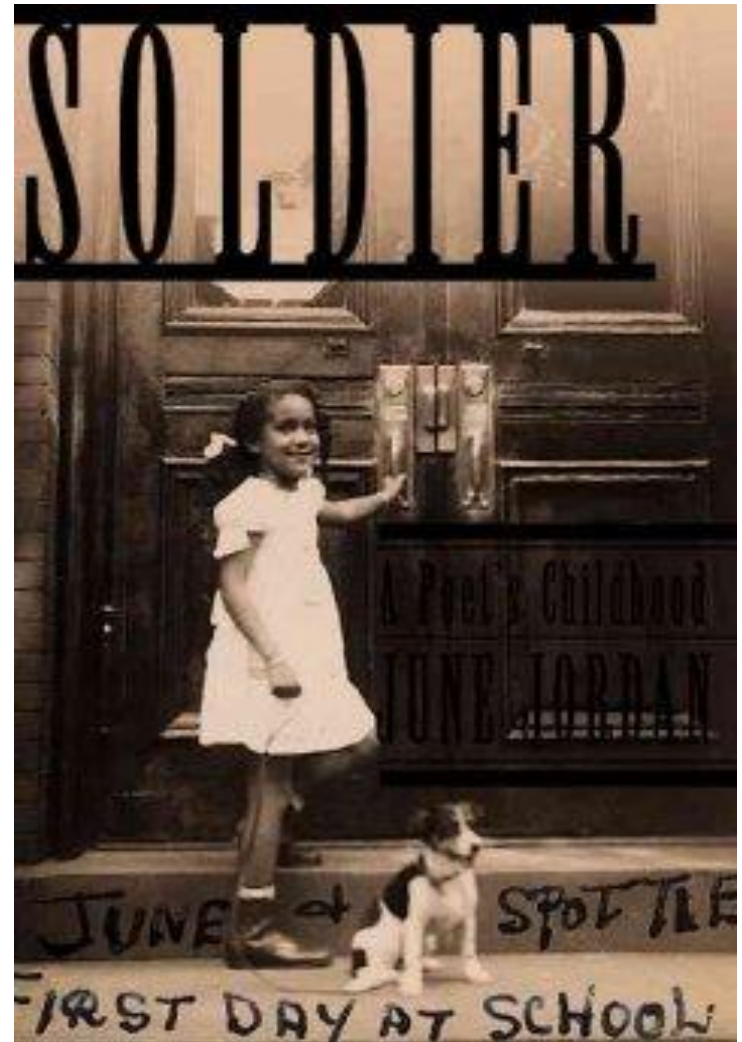




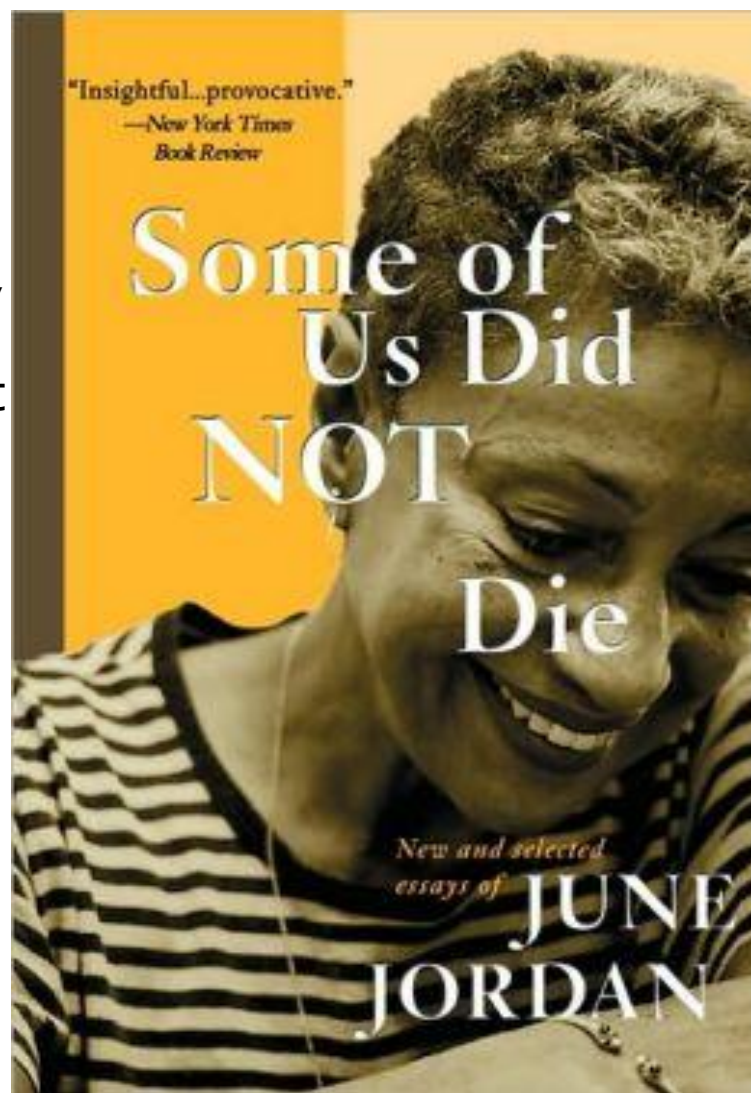
"It is a sad thing to consider that this country has given its least to those who have loved it the most." --June Jordan

THE ROOT
www.theroot.com

This is a childhood memoir by a poet, essayist, teacher, and journalist. Her immigrant parents struggled to provide her with the educational and social opportunities not available to them or, for that matter, to most blacks of her generation. June Jordan portrays the Harlem and Brooklyn neighbourhoods where she lived and the larger landscape of her imagination. Exploring the nature of memory, writing, and familial as well as social responsibility, Jordan re-creates the world in which her identity as a social and artistic revolutionary was forged.

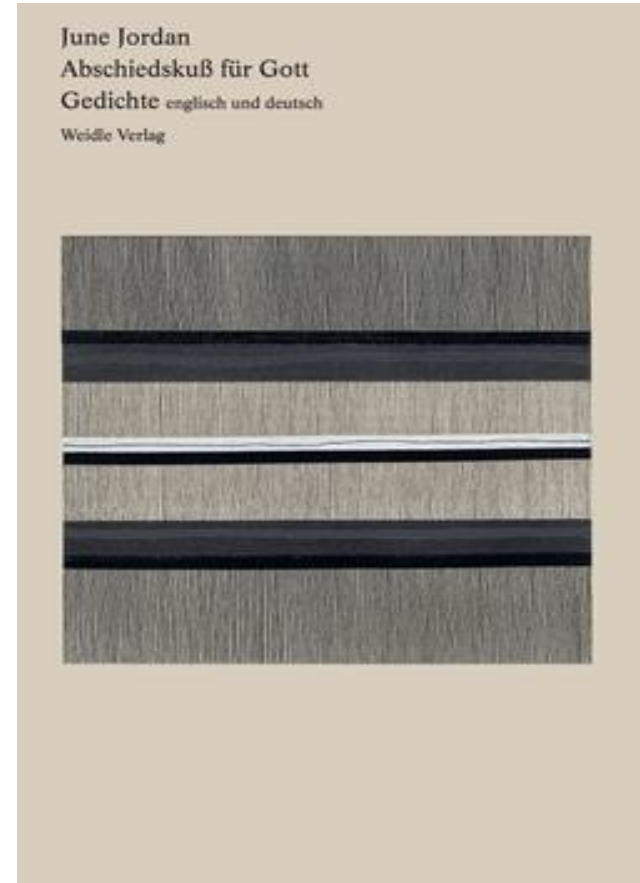


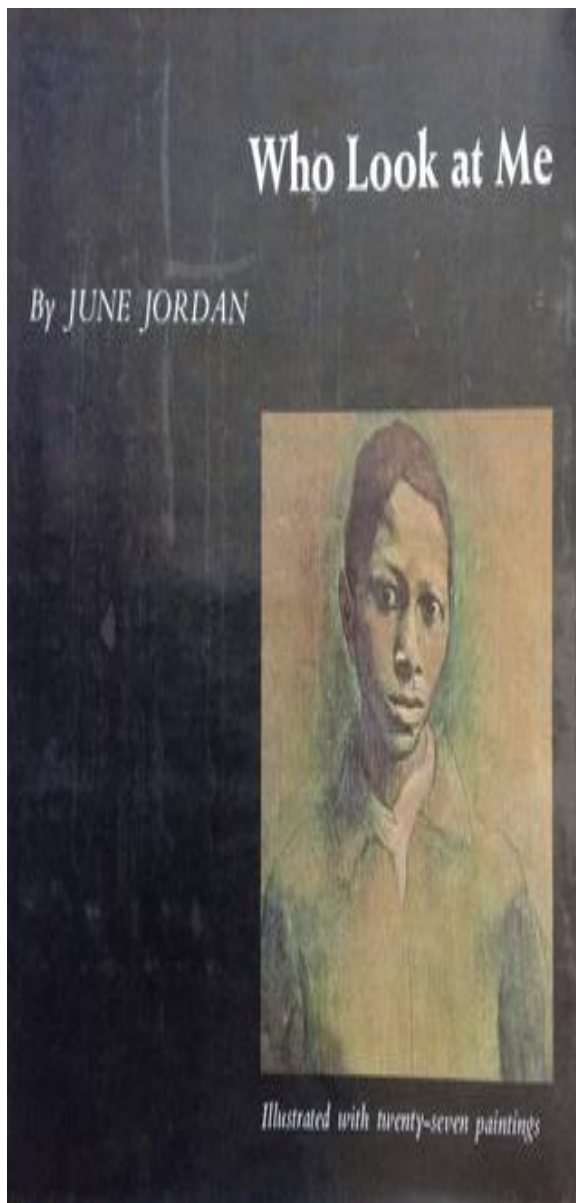
Poet and activist June Jordan wrote her way to the forefront of political analysis, witness and moral summoning for more than half a century. These important new essays, along with work drawn from every phase of her prolific career, document her ongoing leadership and commitment in every conflicted sphere of our second millennium lives: the varieties of supremacist values and policies; the theft of democracy inside the United States; racial and gender inequality, and the arrogance that upholds all forms of justice. In *Some of Us Did Not Die*, June Jordan calls us to a faithful position of outspoken resistance and hope.



Kissing God Goodbye

June Jordan's 1997 book of poetry, *Kissing God Goodbye*, has just been published in Germany by [Weidle Verlag](#), translated, Poetry-for-the-People-style, by the students of Technische Universität Dortmund and Professors Julia Sattler and Walter Grünzweig, in a beautiful bilingual edition, German and English, with an elegant cover by [Max Cole](#).





I am black and alive and looking back at you./... Although the world/ forgets me/ I will say yeas/ AND NO." Proud and provocative, this is a single poem written in many different voices, touching on black experience in a gentle surprise of phrase. The punctuation is casual, the syntax slippery, the impact quite remarkable, especially if the poem is read aloud by a person who's "together." And the illustrations are stunning -- 27 reproductions (many in full color) of paintings by American artists (Wyeth, Homer, Eakins, etc.), all with black subjects. Most of the themes have been approached by other black poets -- the uniqueness of black culture, weary defiance toward white hypocrisy and shallowness; here those feelings spring out again; refreshed via a slight mismatch of terms ("the midnight of the winter"; "a hungerland of great prosperity"; "the grieving fury of his life"; "the pocket deadly need to please"). There are a few stylistic rough spots (e.g. excessive alliteration) and one or two lines are impossibly abstruse. Altogether, though, it has a distinguished stance and a presence of its own. "A hallelujah little room.

Technical Difficulties, June Jordan's 1992 collection of essays, has just come out in Spanish, with an introduction by Angela Davis, especially written for this foreign-language edition. The beautiful book is published by [LaOficina / BAAM](#), Madrid.

“I AM A FEMINIST, AND WHAT THAT MEANS TO ME IS MUCH THE SAME AS THE MEANING OF THE FACT THAT I AM BLACK: IT MEANS THAT I MUST UNDERTAKE TO LOVE MYSELF AND TO RESPECT MYSELF AS THOUGH MY VERY LIFE DEPENDS UPON SELF-LOVE AND SELF-RESPECT.”

JUNE JORDAN

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