

Baraka, Amiri (1934-) Encyclopedia Article

Baraka, Amiri (1934-)

The following sections of this BookRags Literature Study Guide is offprint from Gale's For Students Series: Presenting Analysis, Context, and Criticism on Commonly Studied Works: Introduction, Author Biography, Plot Summary, Characters, Themes, Style, Historical Context, Critical Overview, Criticism and Critical Essays, Media Adaptations, Topics for Further Study, Compare & Contrast, What Do I Read Next?, For Further Study, and Sources.

(c)1998-2002; (c)2002 by Gale. Gale is an imprint of The Gale Group, Inc., a division of Thomson Learning, Inc. Gale and Design and Thomson Learning are trademarks used herein under license.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction: "Social Concerns", "Thematic Overview", "Techniques", "Literary Precedents", "Key Questions", "Related Titles", "Adaptations", "Related Web Sites". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults: "About the Author", "Overview", "Setting", "Literary Qualities", "Social Sensitivity", "Topics for Discussion", "Ideas for Reports and Papers". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

All other sections in this Literature Study Guide are owned and copyrighted by BookRags, Inc.

Contents

Baraka, Amiri (1934-) Encyclopedia Article.....	1
Contents.....	2
Baraka, Amiri (1934—).....	3

Baraka, Amiri (1934—)

Writer Amiri Baraka founded the 1960s Black Arts Movement, transforming white, liberal aesthetics into black nationalist poetics and politics. In 1967, he converted to Islam and changed his name from Leroi Jones to Amiri Baraka. His career can be divided in three stages: beatnik/bohemian (1957-1964), black nationalism (1965-1974), and Marxist revolutionary (1974-present). In 1960 he travelled to Cuba with a group of black artists. As a result, he grew disillusioned with the bohemian/beatnik atmosphere of Greenwich Village and began seeing the necessity of art as a political tool. The play *Dutchman* (1964) brought him into the public limelight, a one-act play about Clay, a young, black, educated man who, while riding the New York subway, is murdered by a beautiful white woman symbolizing white society. No American writer has been more committed to social justice than Amiri Baraka. He is dedicated to bringing the voices of black America into the fiber of his writings.

Further Reading:

Baraka, Amiri. *The Autobiography of LeRoi Jones*. Chicago, Lawrence Hill Books, 1997.

Harris, William, editor. *The LeRoi Jones/Amiri Baraka Reader*. New York, Thunder's Mouth Press, 1991.