

The "Hisploration" Project: Looking at the History of LGBT Documentaries and the Relation to My Own History With My Sexuality and Gender Identity



By: Daniel-José Cyan



The Rejected (Aired 9/11/1961)



A cultural awakening, the topic is now being brought into the spotlight.

First US televised documentary program about homosexuality. Received mostly positive reviews from critics. Documentary featured Margaret Mead, an anthropologist, Psychiatrist Karl Bowman, Episcopal Bishop of San Francisco James Pike and rabbi Alvin Fine, attorneys, and Mattachine Society members.

I Rejected (First Thoughts)

I remember my first crush in preschool when I still lived in Guatemala. I didn't know it was a crush until many years later, but I remember paying special attention to one of the girls in my class. I wanted to be close to her but didn't understand my feelings or what they meant.

It wasn't until I reached middle school that I had my first conscious crush on someone of the same sex. It was a childhood crush on a teacher, but I knew that my attraction wasn't like the "crushes" I had on boys in the past, where I pursued them because they were the most popular and well liked. This time I was genuinely obsessed.

An awakening for me, the topic of sexuality was being brought forward.

The Homosexuals – 1967



First network televised documentary about homosexuality. Three years in the making, The Homosexuals went through two producers and multiple revisions. The episode included interviews with several gay men, psychiatrists, legal experts and cultural critics, interspersed with footage of a gay bar and a police sex sting. The Homosexuals garnered mixed critical response. The network received praise from some quarters and criticism from others for even airing the program.

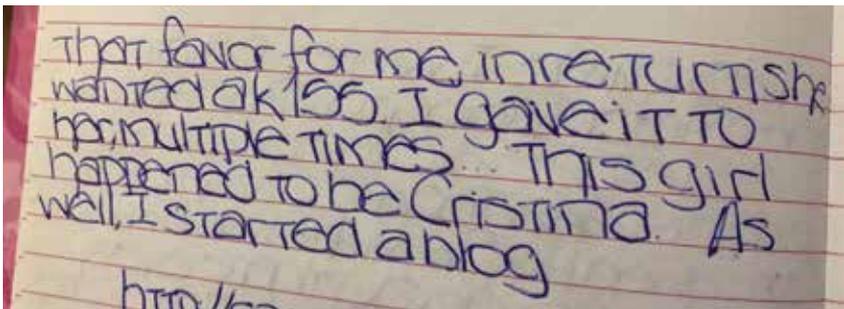


Mixed/Changed Feelings

The Homosexuals represented a changing perspective of the public on queer identity. The next phase in my life was a shifting perspective of my own identity.

Once I determined that my obsession was attraction, I immediately tried to reject it. I was raised to believe homosexuality was wrong and ungodly, so I attempted to pray hoping my feelings would go away. My feelings never went away but I chose to ignore them and pretend like I never felt attraction toward other girls. The seventh grade, the following year, I continued to deny my attractions but was taunted by dreams where I would kiss other girls or date them. Finally, I fully embraced my attractions the following year when I realized they weren't going away.

A diary entry in 2010 where I was having dreams about girls in romantic ways and didn't want to admit it.

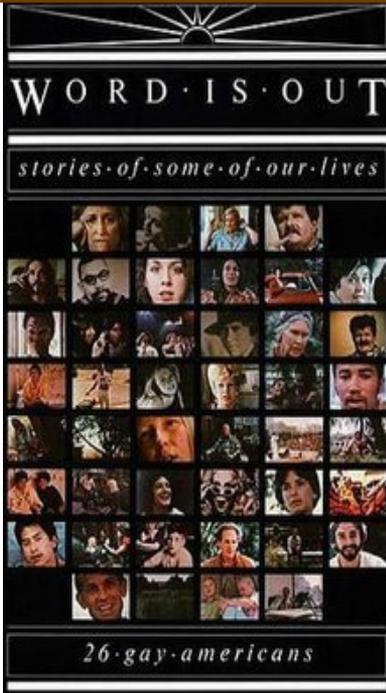


that favor for me in return she
wanted a k 100. I gave it to
her multiple times. This girl
happened to be Cristina. As
well, I started a blog
http://

Word is Out – 1977

Word Is Out was important in that gay people were able to tell their story in the way truest to them. They were showing their lives out and proudly.

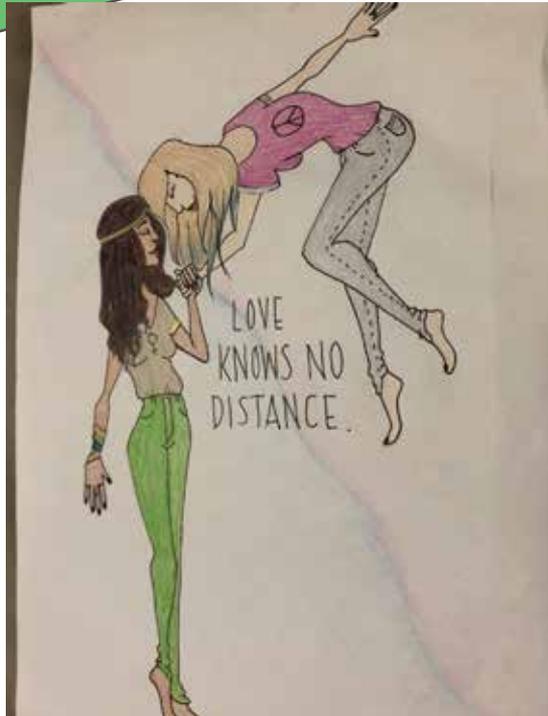
Word Is Out intercuts interviews with 26 people, who speak about their experiences as gay men and lesbians. The interviewees describe their experiences of coming out; falling in and out of love; and struggling against prejudice, stereotypes, and discriminatory laws. The participants deliver their testimony with intelligence, grace, honesty, and conviction, creating an engaging and moving oral history.



Word is Out (Pride in Sexuality)

I got into my first long distance relationship with a girl and came out to my classmates my last year of junior high. I came out as bisexual but understood that my attraction to women surpassed anything I ever felt for boys. I went into high school being very loud and open about being a lesbian and fell in love for the first time with a woman.

Word is Out was important for queer people to share their experiences. My acceptance of myself was important for my growth in total.



Questioning Gender

My second year of high school, I started to question the feelings I had about gender that I ignored all my life. I looked online to try to find labels and identified as bigender until I rejected that my third year of high school. I chucked up the questions of my gender to be equal to my feelings toward women, believing I was "so gay" I felt masculine. Before I started my senior year, I came out as genderqueer and accepted that my questions of gender and my sexuality did not affect one another.



2012




 I've officially named myself Nathan Noel DiMasi. Because I can. #FuckingBoss

[View all 2 comments](#)

OCTOBER 30, 2012



I used to watch a LOT of YouTube videos to try to understand what I was feeling and see how others with the same feelings lived their lives.

2015

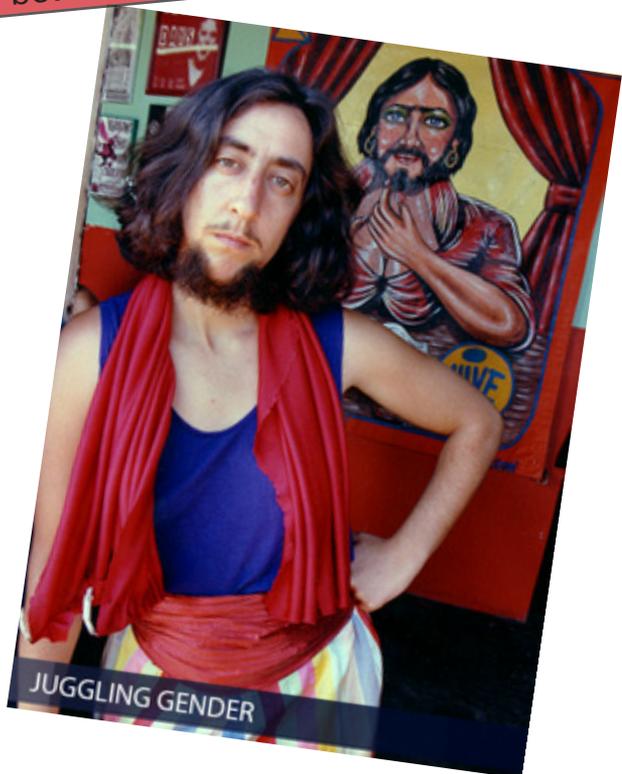


Is this what it feels like to be a working man? (To clear up, working man who loves his job... interrrrrrrp): @he_willbeloved, that stupid face on the left is for you.

Juggling Gender – 1992

A loving portrait of Jennifer Miller, a lesbian performer who lives her life with a full beard. Miller works as a performance artist, circus director, clown and as the “bearded lady” in one of the only remaining sideshows in America. In public she is often mistaken for a man, an experience she handles with the wit and intelligence that characterize her stage performances. JUGGLING GENDER explores the fluidity of gender and raises important questions about the construction of sexual and gender identity.

In the film, Miller shares that her being perceived as a man by society shaped the way she thought of gender for herself.
The way I was perceived by others eventually helped me better understand my own gender.



Perceptions of Self Influencing Identity

I identified as a genderqueer lesbian, knowing full well that I was perceived as female by the rest of the world. Experimenting with gender expressions and being perceived as female most of the time, I felt it was stifling. I felt uncomfortable being acknowledged one way and feeling like another. More time passed before I came to terms with knowing I was and wanted to be acknowledged as a man.



Daniel-José Cyan
December 30, 2016 · 🧑🏻 · 📌

I stole this idea from @sangrelust .

I wanted to use the earliest picture from 2016 but to preserve my privacy and leave the past where it is, I used a less triggering picture of me back from December 27th, 2015. I was in Guatemala then.

This year has been hell of a year. But along with the shit came some gold. So here's my list of great changes this year has brought.

1) I finally figured out that I was a guy. FINALLY. And I've been so much happier and less emptier inside. I can't even recognise the "Dani" from months back. Now Daniel, he's something else.

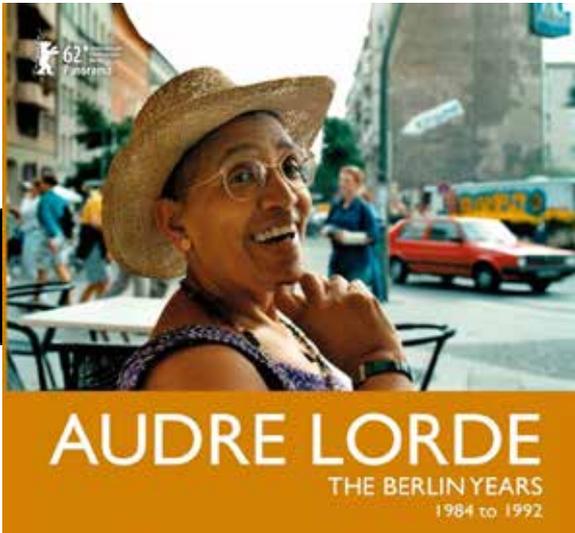
2016



2015

How bad are the tan lines on my feet? Also, how does one selfie?
#filtersmaketheworldgoround #genderqueer

Audre Lorde – The Berlin Years 1984 to 1992 – 2012



Audre Lorde, the highly influential, award-winning African-American lesbian poet came to live in West-Berlin in the 80s and early '90s. She was the mentor and catalyst who helped ignite the Afro-German movement while she challenged white women to acknowledge and constructively use their privileges. With her active support a whole generation of writers and poets for the first time gave voice to their unique experience as people of color in Germany. This documentary contains previously unreleased audiovisual material from director Dagmar Schultz's archives including stunning images of Audre Lorde off stage. With testimony from Lorde's colleagues and friends the film documents Lorde's lasting legacy in Germany and the impact of her work and personality.

"I will never experience womanhood
only in my mother's dreams of being mujer"
-From a poem I wrote inspired by Audre Lorde's documentary.

Living at Intersections

There is no such thing as single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives.

—Audre Lorde



Years into my transition, my gender has become a part of my being as much as other parts of my identity. My ethnicity, my lived experience as having a girlhood, and being an artist all play together.



chasingcolorproject "I felt very distant from my own culture because I moved to the USA when I was 4 years old and didn't return back to Guatemala until 14 years after, and then 3 years after that. I always recognised I was an immigrant and that made me different than those around me but I felt ashamed for most of my life. I had a desire to be white or to be from a place with "more culture" because when I was younger, I hadn't realised how BEAUTIFUL a culture Guatemala has. It wasn't until a couple of years ago I've come to truly appreciate where I'm from. And now I can't be more proud.

As for my trans identity, I've been lucky to grow up in a city that protects a lot of my rights and where my identity isn't totally abnormal.

For a long time, I didn't think my ethnicity made a difference as to how people treat me. I think I've just come to accept microaggressions as a reality. Sometimes I even have to remind myself that things like people directly asking me if I'm undocumented is discrimination. I do, however, strongly believe people show more visible fear of me now that I am read as a Latino man. It's a striking difference from being a sex object from when I was read as a Latina.

"Openness may not completely disarm prejudice. but it's a good place to start." -Jason Collins

