



***Public Enemy***  
**(USA, 1999, 88 minutes)**  
**Directed by Jens Meurer**  
**Study Guide**

**Synopsis**

The film is a documentary of The Black Panther Party as told by four former Party members: founding Party member Bobby Seale, now an author on the lecture circuit; Kathleen Cleaver, a Party organizer, now a professor of Law at Sarah Lawrence College; Jamal Joseph, an organizer in the Party's Harlem office, now poet, founder of Impact Repertory Theater; award-winning director, producer and assistant professor of film at Columbia University; and Nile Rogers, Party member, founder of the musical group Chic, producer and musician. The stories they tell are personal ones. *Public Enemy* is not an in-depth look at Party history, but it is all the more effective when one realizes through film what these people saw, what they accomplished, how it affected them and how it failed. Ultimately, it is the telling of the story that is the success of the Panther's legacy.

**Study Questions**

- What do you know about The Black Panther Party?
- What do you know about Fred Hampton, Sr. and the Chicago Panthers?
- Do you feel that the Panthers played a major role in African American history?
- What is the legacy of the Black Panther Party?

• **Discussion Questions**

- Why were government officials and the FBI so worried about the Black Panthers?
- What do you know about CONTELPRO, and who do you think was its' purpose?
- In what ways do you think the Party succeeded? In what ways do you think it failed?
- Could there be organizations like The Black Panther Party in America today?
- If so, how would it differ from the Panthers of the 60s?
- If not, why do you think such an organization couldn't exist today?
- Do you think the goals of the Party were achievable, why or why not?