

Women named celie
in the the color purple



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Based off the reviews and research other the novel *The Color Purple*, written by Alice Walker, the theme that was perceived was to know your self worth, to love yourself, and keep faith because regardless of the circumstances that are given it always passes. Alice Walker tells the story about a poor, African American women named Celie who is has face struggles of abuse from men in her life at a young age. She was being repeatedly sexually abused by her father as a young girl and was forced to give her baby away after becoming pregnant by him.

After being abused by her father she was then given to a man named Albert, who was a widower and was a father to four kids. He not only mentally but also physically abused Celie. In the book Walker talked about the series of events that led Celie to become a strong independent woman who loved herself and spoke up for herself as well. During the 1900's, which was the time period taking place in the novel, the love displayed between black men and women was highly dysfunctional. Most women were treated less than and taken advantage of much like Celie was, according to an New York times article review. " During the course of the novel, which begins in the early 1900's and ends in the mid-1940's, Celie frees herself from her husband's repressive control" (Watkins, 1982)."

The novel has a strong impact for those who have dealt with anything of or relating to the topics that are discussed. It may have had the strongest impact on women who have been trying to find their own voice. After all Celie had been through, she found things that made her happy. She also developed relationships with strong willed women who became much inspiration for her to come out of her shell and demand the respect that she

was long overdue for. Shug Avery was one of the important characters that Celie looked up to for the confidence that she lacked. Which was very interesting because she their first encounter with each other wasn't the most pleasant at all. Shug was the woman that Albert longed for when his wife died. He was completely in love with her and would do anything for her. The night that Albert and his son Harpo brought Shug or to their house the first thing she told Celie was that she was ugly. You could imagine how what Celie was feeling when she heard those words coming out of her mouth. But later throughout the book Shug became Celie's peace you could say. After Celie and her sister Nettie were broken apart by Albert, after his attempt to rape her, Celie felt like she had lost a piece of herself. At that point she didn't have anyone.

The meaning of the novel to me, kind of has the same interpretation that I had when reading others novels as well such as For Colored Girls who have Committed Suicide When the Rainbow is Enough. I feel as if African American women have had a continuous struggle to be comfortable in their own skin. Colorism is still a topic that affects the United States . That's why you see ads and slogans such as Black is Beautiful because for a long time black wasn't considered beautiful especially the darker you were. Overtime views towards african american women and men on the topic of colorism have changed however, the problem is still there. In addition to this, the novel itself also touches basis on inequality between men and women as well as how unequal it was for black people then and even now. There's an old saying that most of us live by that goes You have to work to work twice as hard to get at least half of what they got. This saying really goes for almost

anything, in life when wanting to achieve something. We have to be and go above our counterparts for positions that ultimately shouldn't need that type of energy pushed towards but yet there is.

Throughout the story she continuously spoke to God asking him for the guidance that she lacked. This helped her find herself spiritually and she build relationships with women that genuinely loved and cared for her. As the relationship between Shug and Celie began to get closer Shug inspired her to build her confidence and be comfortable in her own skin. As I can recall one moment in the book where they were at the opening of a new jazz joint that Harpo had opened up, and as a fight had broken out between Sophia and Harpo's new wife that erupted into a huge brawl. Shug and Celie managed to escape the flying fist that were being thrown and ended up in her dressing room. Here Shug took notice that Celie always covered her smile and when she was asked why, Celie replied because she was ugly. After hearing that response from then on out she reassured Celie that she was beautiful person inside and out and that she should always be smiling.

Outside of what other viewers have decided that the meaning of the story was, I found my own meaning through actually trying to connect with the things that Celie had to go through even though somethings, I had never experienced for myself. I have seen the movie the color purple millions of times but it wasn't until after I read the book that I realized what the real meaning of the what was being taught in the movie. Celie struggled to find herself and she didn't know how to be comfortable in her own skin. She Was spiritually trying to find herself as she talked to God throughout the story and the events she talked about. " Dear God, I am fourteen years old. I am I

have always been a good girl. Maybe you can give me a sign letting me know what is happening to me.” (Walker, 1). This was the beginning of the first letter she wrote to God when things had started to go downhill for her. Her mother had passed away and she was being sexually abused by her stepfather.

The legacy of the novel is to stand up for your freedom and stand up for your spirituality. Allowing someone to control you and take advantage of you is not okay. You lose your power to yourself and give someone else the upper hand against you. It is extremely important for you to have control over who you are as person it builds so much character. It symbolizes that you know who you are as an individual and that you hold substance, as well as values to yourself. The Color Purple showed you how to forgive and how to grow from the things that may have hurt you in past, or made your feel less of yourself. The things that Celie had to encounter in order to aspire into the women she had become, she had to humble herself and forgive. No matter how much she felt like she couldn't make it against the odds she was given, she managed to pull through and do better for her own reasons. As women its takes a lot for us to hold our own, especially back then. “ The Color Purple deals with a black woman's struggle to free herself from a position of servitude in a male-dominated society. Celie, Nettie, Sophia, Shug Avery, each of them must fight her own battle against repression and prejudice...”(Hedge 2009) Women were seen as slaves and just weak back then and the consequence of even thinking about talking back or standing up against a man, were brutal and sadly it carries over into todays' world as well. I think some people struggle to let children read this book because it is

very controversial. There was a lot of sex involved in the storyline as well the gender roles being played. At one point in the book Celie seemed to be attracted to women.

The book is being used as historical significance you could say. During the time period that the book was written there was still segregation and racism. For example, in the book when Sophia was released from jail, after assaulting a white man for calling her a N*gg**, she was asked to be a maid by a white woman named Ms. Millie. Also during this time women had limited rights at this period of time especially for African Americans. Juke joints and small jazz clubs were how African Americans had their fun and came together, besides being in the church.. Males were displayed as the breadwinners while women were to bow down and obey. Women suffered for so long because they believed that this type of behavior is okay and it was not. To be treated like someone's property, an object and not a subject are still problems we have today.

Something that is still relevant to in the book to me, I believe is to no matter what troubles you're going through is to keep your faith. It reminds me of my collarbone tattoo that has the quote from the late, but extraordinary Maya Angelou. This too shall pass far as anything that I am going through, it's a reminder to never give up. Because even after the rain, comes a rainbow. I was put on this earth for a reason, just because I haven't found my ultimate purpose yet doesn't mean that I am not important. Also, don't lose sight of what is in front of you even when the going gets tough. Celie never lost her faith, there were multiple times that she wanted to end it all but with the faith she kept and with the love from the relationships that she built with

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some of the other characters, it kept her going. She transformed into a completely different person. Her confidence was there, she became reconnected with her sister and most importantly her son and her daughter. She continued to talk to God and he answered all her prayers and blessings.