



# Learning the Blessings and Curses of Profanity in Alice Walker's Color Purple

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### **ABSTRACT**

Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* depicts the lives of characters who are socially impoverished by the two curses of being colored and not white; and being a woman, and not man. Being colored woman is considered a rank low in the Afro-American social order hierarchy. Celie is the protagonist, and she is depicted as a poor, unattractive, and uneducated woman with two children, who were forcefully taken from her. She was abused by a man, whom she calls Daddy. She marries a bad man who beats her physically and verbally. The book features several oppression faced by female characters Nettie, Sophia, and Squeak, and all of whom are the racial victims of gender-based abuse. These oppressed women rise up and fight back, taking control of their own destiny.

**Keywords:** Gender, violence, abuse, racism, subjugation, sexism

### **INTRODUCTION**

Alice Malsenier Walker is an African-American writer and a feminist. Her third novel *The Color Purple* was published in 1982; she won both the Pulitzer Prize and in 1983 American Book Award for Fiction. The feminist novel is about the abuses faced by illiterate black woman, who fight for freedom and power. The novel was praised for the depth of its female characters. The novel is a song of joy and triumph of a woman's struggle against racism, sexism and social determinism. Authors' writings have always focused on the role of women in culture and history. He is an open bisexual and empathetic to people of all genders, races and ethnicities. She has brought out her own experiences as a child of violence, abuse and pain in the lives of her female characters. These moments are etched in her mind and soul. Gender, racism, sexuality, and the 'American Dream' are fundamental themes to be analysed. Walker demonstrates the transformation of the mentally, physically and spiritually abused black woman into a free, strong and vulnerable woman.

### **Patriarchal Oppression**

Subjugation and subjugation of women mostly occurred due to the prevailing patriarchal system in the society. The patriarchal system is formed from male and female participation in the main reason for the persistence of women's oppression and subordination in society. Walker writes about incidents connected to her life experience as a black woman living in the midst of white society. *The Color Purple* not only describes the suffering of a woman as a victim, but also gives examples of how to become a non-victim. Celie, a black woman who is subjected to oppression, suffering and patriarchy, then successfully frees herself from all the tribulations. Celie, a black woman, was disenfranchised directly from her stepmother. She was not even allowed to speak for herself. She shared everything only with God and mostly addressed Almighty God through her letters where she mentioned all her emotions. Celie's speech reveals what happened to her because of racism and sexism. Celie's communication with God through letters convinced her to survive. She was raped by her stepfather who she thought was her real father. She was raped twice and impregnated "She asks me about the first whore? I say God, I don't know any other man or what else to say" (Walker 3). Celie hates herself and doesn't want to know about her body, which has been a constant source of exploitation. She suffered from an overwhelming sense of intrusion.

Daniel Rors highlights the male chauvinistic oppression by stating, that "To confront the body is to confront not only a personal abuse, but the physical abuse of women throughout history; as an outward sign of women's servitude. This abuse is a reminder of woman's degradation and relegation to a lower status" (Rors 70). Celie's stepfather has given a bad picture in the story. When Mr. came and asked for Nettie, their father refused to give it to her. Instead, she offers Celie body-shaming, saying she's setting a bad example for other women and that she's too old. She was verbally assaulted and made to feel inferior and degraded.

Initially, Celie is supposed to serve her harmful dad, and, later, her better half Mr. \_\_\_\_\_, and Nettie, not having any desire to do either, takes off. In any case, Nettie penances the occupation for the most part saved for ladies,

parenthood, and to teach herself and work for Samuel and Corrine during their minister works in Africa. Celie, has two youngsters, whom Nettie then, at that point, brings up in Africa, unintentionally. Celie possibly abandons the drudgery of housework when Shug comes to reside with her and Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ and starts to show Celie her body and about alternate approaches to everyday life, outside the control of men. Celie and Squeak, Harpo's subsequent spouse, wind up living with Shug in Memphis, and Celie can begin her jeans making organization.

The men in the novel, be that as it may, experience an alternate direction. It is normal that people of color of this time, particularly in the South, work in the fields, and that the ladies comply with them totally. In any case, after Shug and afterward Celie abandon him, Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ acknowledges exactly the amount he underestimated and the amount he, and his child Harpo, have depended on crafted by ladies all through their lives. Essentially, in Africa, Nettie oversees both to accomplish the orientation job at first expected of her, and continues working and fashioning her own way throughout everyday life, in the long run spending north of twenty years as a teacher in Africa.

The novel celebrates both the progression of family, populated both by solid female characters and humble male ones, and the way that the families, and the jobs inside them, are liquid, frequently covering, and part of a long bend toward balance and more prominent figuring out, regardless of whether that circular segment is frequently specked with misfortune, misuse, and disregard.

### **Racist Oppression**

Celie was singled out and attacked by Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ behaves as a white person by associating Celie with her weekly position, as she is a black woman. He uses racism, white supremacy, power, and prejudice against her as she tries to transform into a white-dominated society. Celie and her lover embrace were physically and mentally abused by her father and husband, which made her to despise her own body. So she believed that this was her fate and the only way to live was to live in silence.

The mayor's wife does not understand that her belittling treatment of blacks is condescending. The mayor's wife sees a perfect and respectable-looking black lady with a vehicle and her fashionable kids, and on second thought of her esteem for them to inspire respect, it inspires in her the desire to have the black lady come to serve as her house keeper. Sofia's response of saying Hell No to the mayor's wife leads to assault by the mayor and by a huge gathering of cops because it is almost incomprehensible for a black lady to argue sharply at a white lady.

In the USA at that point, there were separate sections for whites and blacks openly trains, which was a glaring sign of racial discrimination. Excellence standards of the time also mirror a biased notion of being black. For instance, Albert's sister Carrie disagrees that Albert's deceased wife, whom Kate described as gorgeous was really lovely just because Albert's deceased wife had a dim coloring. Also, Tashi observes that from pictures of ladies she saw in western magazines, obviously individuals of America could have done without darker looking ladies.

According to Walker, women of color are the victims of both racism and sexism. The author also notes that the black woman is more loyal to the black man than herself (Walker 138). In the United States, racial supremacy is the exercise of power over a minority's culture and race.

### **Sexism in The Colour Purple**

Alice focused on sexism through her female character, Nettie, Sophie, Celie and Shug who, who underwent physical and psychological tantrums. Race controls the sexuality in terms of controlling images of black women like 'hoochie' or the 'mammy'. Gender limits sexuality as men oppressed by American society. Black women's sexuality was under the absolute rule of American society. For example, in the novel *The Color Purple*, Celie's stepmother sells her to Mr. Albert, insisting that she is ugly and black, and because Celie's mother cannot satisfy Celie's stepfather's sexuality, she is sold as a commodity to Albert by working hard. Desires, Celie is raped by him.

The control and exploitation of black female sexuality is presented here. By regulating the sexuality of black women, the assumption of 'good girls' and 'bad girls' arose. This is a way of creating a sexual hierarchy within American society. In this novel, major themes are discussed and bring to light the theme of violence that was not written about until the 1960s. In *The Color Purple*, the role of male dominance plays an important role in establishing the bad character given to Celie. Albert abuses Celie as not being like Shuck. Shuck finds out about this and rejects Albert.

Celie was forced by her stepmother to drop out of school when she became pregnant with her first. She is then forced to meet Albert, where she is literally taken as a slave to take care of Albert's four children and his household. Eventually, knowing that God has a definition, Celie gains enough faith to leave Albert.

### **Symbolizing the Indomitable Female Spirit**

Sophia strives to exist as an Amazon woman, demonstrating her strong mental powers and ability to change society. Sophia brings a white girl named Eleanor Jane with love and affection. Celie and Sophia, who suffer

similar manipulations and repressions in a male-dominated society, become friends and end up giving Sophia pants, imagining that Sophia can enjoy her freedom as much as she flies to the moon.

The current paper examines Walker's utilization of the idea through her affirmation of the unyielding soul of black ladies. It is an endeavor to show the womanist viewpoint in the book. The term 'womanism' indicates 'black feminism'. It very well might be characterized as a mindfulness among black ladies that they have been abused throughout everyday life and distorted in writing essentially on the grounds that they are black, female and poor; and a pledge to join against the bigot, misogynist and authoritarian powers of American culture, and stand up for themselves as wise, skilled and delicate people. As indicated by historians, the womanist, or black feminist, development owes rise to the conviction white feminism has served the interests of white ladies alone, and has neglected to address itself to the black ladies' insight of racism, sexism and classism. In male white American culture, imperceptibility, abuse and underestimation have for some time been the normal burdens of lady and black men the same.

The predicaments of black ladies have been a lot of more terrible than that of white ladies or black men. While white ladies have languished over being female and black for being black, black ladies have needed to bear the "twofold danger" of racism and sexism; and had been treated as inferiors by American culture Blacks and. Their records lie covered, uninitiated, inconsistently interpreted. The main mission of womanist composing is to detonate all fantasies and generalizations encompassing her, and address her as a person of flesh, who feels, thinks and has her own cravings; as an individual battling towards opportunity and selfhood. It embraces to concentrate on her mental development, her relationship to her significant other and youngsters, her general public and history. The Womanism is a development of self-esteem the connections between black ladies, their way of life and their soul to trip for personality, completeness and freedom.

The scholarly foundations of the term womanist can be followed back to Alice Walker's prelude to her book of expositions, *Looking for Our Mom's Nurseries: Womanist Writing* (1983). She authored and utilized the term to allude to the black feminist had of solidarity and constancy, which she holds to be essential to self-awareness. As per Walker, a womanist is a black feminist or feminist of variety who is ludicrous, nervy, bold; as a lady who loves others lady, physically, potentially and non-sexually. A womanist novel is one in which fictitious black lady move from physical or mental subjugation to freedom and opportunity. It is portray by the development from disarray, protection from the laid out request and the revelation of a liberating request.

The novel written in epistolary and self-portraying structure, the novel impersonates the slave story that has impacted and formed African American composition as well as assisted the African American slaves with moving from object to subject. It renounces the middle class ethical quality and replaces the ordinary hetero plot with black lesbianism. Taking everything into account, portrays the enmity between black lady, it concerns black lady exploited by black men actually, physically and financially, their lesbian holding against the oppressive powers of man centric society, and their eventually acquiring win over them. The account of two sisters, Celie and Nettie, who are compelled to live far separated for thirty long years. During this, they hold keeping in touch with one another about their anguish and battle. These letters and those composed by Celie to God structure the texture of the book. Celie's experiencing ranges her constrained perverted relationship with her stepfather to her savage beating, sexual abuse and financial subjugation on account of her better half. Because of her perverted part, she is tossed into a hypochondriac period of self-rebuke and disarray, and experiences coldness.

A powerless mental survivor of interbreeding in any case, she is unequipped for any obstruction and just keeps on getting through her part and languishing. In any case, later her suggestive relationship with Shug, a blues vocalist and her significant other's escort, her close to home relationship with Sophia and Squeak, and Nettie's energizing and encouraging letters restore her sexual impulse, work on her mental self-portrait and mix strength into her, empowering her to flight her direction to lesbian personality and monetary freedom. Towards the end, she turns into a business person, and her fierce and abusive spouse is seen sitting next to her, quiet and submissive, learning the female specialty of sewing.

The gathering of isolated mother and the kids, and the sisters is notified as a company of woman folk endured the battle of oppression as black women. Hence, following the custom of a bildungsroman, Walker begins presenting Celie as a befuddled and powerless survivor of physical, sexual and monetary mistreatment, and her psychosexual development and financial opportunity through lesbian relationship. Womanism can be followed in the structure as well as happy of *Purple*.

Its epistolary structure in itself is reminiscent of lesbian sexuality: inside the system of lesbian-feminism, the letter implies the female body, and correspondence between two ladies is reminiscent of lesbianism. In the novel *The Color Purple*, he shows his heroine caught up in the full range of possible oppressions. Walker enriched the understanding of black American women and paid homage to the enduring beauty and magic of the black oral tradition.

## **CONCLUSION**

Alice Walker shows that little by little women overcome oppression, patriarchy, and sexuality through female characters who learn from the painful experience of slavery, dominance, sexism, and racism of black men. An independent and strong woman lives a purposeful life (D'Brian 73). As a result, Celie undergoes a series of changes. Through Celie, Walker has represented not only Celie's life situation but also the entire society living under the same oppressive conditions.

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