

Name: Elsedeeck
Subject: English "The Color Purple"
Date due on: 16/10/2008

Write a character study of Celie, Albert, and Shug.

Celie:

The Color Purple is based on the character Celie. Celie is protagonist of the novel and is the main narrator in the novel, and it is done through a series of letter she rights to "God".

Writing her letters to "God" from the beginning of the novel signifies that Celie is a shamed on what happened to her during her life. This is reinforced by the address to her last letter, where she address everything "God", "stars" "trees" "people". "Dear God" is repeated twice which shows Celie's big fate in God and religion, and is enforced by "with God help" in her first letter when she wanted to defend her sister from their father. It is only when her sister comes back to home with her two children in the last letter, does Celie have the courage to speak to everyone. Celie's character changes during the novel. At the beginning she starts off as an ignorant 14 year old girl. This is seen by how week she was in school and how she easily forgets. This is seen in her English grammar and mistakes in her letters. She writes the word as she speaks them not as they are supposed to be, but this changes during the end if the novel. Celie develops herself when she left Albert with Shug and has learned new skills which she used to live on.

At the beginning of the storey we see that Celie has no control on her own life. She has been raped twice by who she thinks is her father, and both of her babies have been taken away from her. She does not "fight, I stay where I'm told." Even thought she was the one asking "Pa" to be married to Albert, she only did it as a self sacrifice to save her sister Nettie from being married to this person. Celie at the end of the storey changes her mentality with the aid of Shug, and becomes a bit different character. She grows from a pitiful child in the beginning of the book to become a sensible, happy independent woman, running her own sewing business. During most of her life Celie was under the control and influence of her pa and Albert. This was to the extent that Celie was only able to call Albert by his name only at the end of the book. During most of the time she names him as "Mr. ---". She also does this to Samuel the reverend when she went to the market. This shows that Celie fears men and is under their power. This led her to become kind of homosexual preferring women to men. This is seen in the way she loves Shug, as if she was loving her partner in life.

Most of the time Celie is described as looking and being ugly. This made her believe that she was ugly and has become unsociable. Although Celie was treated by brutality she never avenged herself are became brutal herself. She took care of the children even though they treated her like hell. Celie is very very close to Nettie. Her spirit was down when she thought that she died coming back in a ship. She hated life and detested living it. There is a strong sisterhood relationship between Celie and Nettie.

Albert:

Albert is the husband of Celie. He is often described as a "handsome" man. He might look handsome but his treatment of Celie wasn't. He used to beat her savagely and treat her as if

she was his slave. He is known to Celie as “Mr. –” until her final letter where she manages to call him “Albert”.

Albert was also controlled by someone else. His father decides what Albert does and even chooses his first wife. This is what puts off Shug from marrying Albert, as she wanted a man that could control his own life.

Albert changes twice during the novel. During the majority of the book we see Albert as a cruel person, his only concern is his own pleasure and to marry Shug Avery. We see him as mercy less, when he used to hide Nettie’s letters from Celie, and thus separating the two sisters. Both sisters thought the other dead or in a very bad state because no one replied to the other’s letters. He used to beat Celie for anything and she explains it, and he proves it that he beats her because she is not like Shug. This shows that Albert does not care for individual personalities and wants everything the way he wants it.

But Shug describes a deferent side of Albert. In her account she told to Celie, Albert was a completely different person. He was the kind of man that makes people laugh, not beat them and make them cry. He used to be a very good dancer and a pleasant person to be with. We see some part of this in him when he is with Shug and sometimes with Grady, Shug’s husband.

Albert changes again at the end of the novel, when Celie leaves him. This version of Albert seems to the reader as the best and most gentle like version. He becomes a sensible person, able to communicate with people in a civil way. He listens to people, and is able to give his opinion, without forcing people to accept it. He becomes much nicer to Celie and both of them become close friends. They share sweet conversation and laugh at their past. He even proposes to Celie another marriage promising her a better married life. Celie refuses accepting him as a close friend and a sewing partner. Albert describes his old self as being “fool”. This transformation could be the result of his breakdown from Celie threatening him to put a spell on him before she leaves with Celie, and or some readers suspect that Albert was trying to get close to Celie because she became rich and a successful woman. But I don’t believe the last cause because he became a much more sensible person with everyone excepting Celie’s children and becoming interested on them and how they lives. He also becomes open minded accepting the fact that other people are living in the world and recognizing their culture and beliefs.

Shug Avery:

Shug is a very famous jazz singer. Most people enjoy her singing and dancing, but many detest her, declaring her a slut. This was also Albert’s father belief and one of the reasons he didn’t want Albert to marry Shug.

Although Shug, at her first meeting with Celie, insulted Celie naming her “you’re sure ugly!” she then changes he image of Celie, becoming her soul mate. The people whom detest Shug gave us a bad image of her. But in reality she is a very nice person. She helped Celie realize that she is the master of her life. She helps Celie to have a better life with Albert, forcing him not to beat

her anymore for an example. That's one of the reasons that Celie loves Shug tenderly and describes her as "the most beautiful woman I ever saw"

Shug has an individual character. She is not controlled by anyone, and is able to judge and to choose for herself. In Celie's life Shug and Nettie are the closest to her. Shug helps Celie whenever she is in need, because she has a gentle heart and an open one. She never left her even though she was on the other side of the country. She never left her alone and was Celie's only companion. They become very close that they end up making love together, when Albert and Grady were out of the house drinking.

Although Shug is very close to Celie she is sometimes cruel to others. She admits this when she tells Celie how she was "so mean, and so wild" to Aunt Julie, Albert's first wife. We should note that she was very cruel too, with Albert and Celie when she first came to her house, during the period she was sick. She loves Albert because he is so "funny". She also loves men with passion, as she often says.

Shug sometimes acts masculine, and Celie observes that she "often speaks like man". In that period of history Shug's behavior was unacceptable and was the complete opposite of the other women in the book such as Celie and Sofia.