

In Search of the Color Purple

author: Salamishah Tillet

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Synopsis

author	Salamishah Tillet
readBy	Adenrele Ojo
inLanguage	english

Alice Walker made history in 1982 when she became the first Black woman to win the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award, both for *The Color Purple*. Published in the Reagan Era amid a severe backlash to civil rights, the jazz-age novel tells the story of an African American woman haunted by domestic and sexual violence. Prominent academic and activist Salamishah Tillet combines cultural criticism, history, and memoir to explore Walker’s epistolary novel, showing how it has influenced and been informed by the zeitgeist of the time. *The Color Purple* received both praise and criticism upon publication, and the conversation it sparked around race and gender still continues today. It has been adapted for an Oscar-nominated film and a hit Broadway musical.

Through interviews with Walker, Oprah Winfrey, Quincy Jones, and others, as well as archival research, Tillet studies Walker’s life and the origins of her subjects, including violence, sexuality, gender, and politics. Reading *The Color Purple* at age 15 was a groundbreaking experience for Tillet. It continues to resonate with her - as a sexual-violence survivor, as a teacher of the novel, and as an accomplished academic. Provocative and personal, *In Search of the Color Purple* is a bold work from an important public intellectual.

Reader's comments

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