

Critique

Overall, the author presents an interesting, readable concept. Considering the popularity of Alice Walker's prize-winning novel, *The Color Purple*, and its acclaim since being made into a movie, a wider audience and interest in black Americans will pique prospective reader interest in the article.

"Coping Strategies . . ." serves to compare and contrast the lives of Margaret and Mem from *The Third Life of Grange Copeland* and Celie from *The Color Purple*. Unfortunately, the article states and restates the purpose of the paper is to focus on the women, yet considerably weakens its position by being too heavily laden with Grange Copeland as the lead-in and concluding character. He becomes the "bookend" person who detracts and is almost permitted to overshadow the females within the text and footnote citations. With a little recasting of emphasis, readers should be able to place their attention upon the three women as the thesis statements intended.

The implications of economic impoverishment and entrapment as a reality for numerous black Americans historically and currently should not be overlooked nor downplayed as "Coping Strategies . . ." seems to do. Readers could be quietly misled and overlook these aspects which are an essential foundation to understand Alice Walker's characters; unfortunately such concepts are seemingly relegated to the backstage.

For persons who read the article but have not read the Alice Walker books, or have seen the movie version of *The Color Purple*, an unsettling dissonant feeling could be engendered toward black males. Black males are portrayed in the article (and apparently gleaned from the larger works of Walker) as being resentful, mean-spirited, and jealous of female intervention of efforts to improve the quality of life. Perhaps then, the criticisms leveled at Walker's writings being anti-black males do have a ring of truth to them inasmuch as black females appear to be constantly victimized by their male counterparts. "Coping Strategies . . ." does not appear to dispell the notion and thereby misses an opportunity to address a troublesome intertwined issue.

The idea of examining and discussing coping strategies of the three women is good. The attempts to discuss the appraisal and locus of control while lauding the reflection of realities is strongly stated in the beginning of the paper. As the author winds down the discussion, there is something of a retreat from the blow-by-blow reflection of reality notion. The author has pointed out some very important concepts which speak to others across the lines of color, social status, and gender.

—Janice W. Clemmer