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(Full name Alice Malsenior Walker) American novelist, essayist, poet, short story writer, editor, memoirist, and children's writer. The following entry presents criticism on Walker's novel *The Color Purple* (1982) through 2001. For further information on her life and complete works, see CLC, Volumes 5, 6, 9, 19, 27, and 103. *The Color Purple* is regarded as Walker's most successful and critically acclaimed work. Written in an epistolary style, the novel depicts the harsh life of a young African-American woman in the South in the early twentieth century.Â *The Color Purple* explores the individual identity of the African-American woman and how embracing that identity and bonding with other women affects the health of her community at large.