

Alice

continued from page 6

KW: I was struck by something you said in *Beauty in Truth*: “The pain we inflict on children is the pain we later endure as a society.”

AW: Boy, is that scary, when you consider what we’re doing to children all over the planet. They’re the ones who are truly being terrorized by all the madness adults are perpetrating.

KW: Generational warfare. In the U.S., we even have it here between the prison industrial complex and the indentured servitude of the young via college loans they can never repay.

AW: They’re supposed to be slaves. And those that aren’t just slaves, can become drug addicts. And the drug addicts that are caught get put into the prison system to make a profit for the people who own the prisons. It’s all worked out.

KW: Novelist and short story writer Suzan Greenberg was wondering whether you had any idea that your short story “Everyday Use” would be so widely anthologized?

AW: I did not, and I’m puzzled that it is, because it’s not the story that I would’ve picked to be anthologized so widely. I think it’s chosen partly because it reinforces some people’s notions of the Deep South, Southerners and black people. That story has its own power, but it also permits a kind of distance, as if it happened in the far past. I think that’s why people use it opposed to more gritty stories like “Advancing Luna” or “Laurel,” which come out of the struggle in the South in the Sixties but are very modern in terms of their sense of white and black people grappling with issues of interracial rape and interracial love. I think it’s hard for people to read those stories as dispassionately.

KW: Editor/Legist Patricia Turnier says: You have been a successful authoress for decades. Only about a dozen female laureates have won the literature Nobel Prize since



Alice Walker

The point about the color purple is just that to really see a color is so remarkable! Anything that you can see that is beautiful is a gift. Blue... green... black... yellow... All these colors are amazing.

its inception. Amantine Lucile Aurore Dupin had to adopt the pseudonym George Sand to become a French novelist and memoirist. Historically, it has been difficult for women

to thrive in the literary world and the word “writeress” has been excluded or erased from some dictionaries. How can we break the glass ceiling as authoresses and have our voices heard more?

AW: You can start by not tacking that “ess” onto the end of everything, because you’re either a poet or you’re not, and either a writer or not. You don’t have to accept someone else’s idea that you need to have a tail that shows that you’re wearing a dress. [LOL] You are what you are. If you’re an actor, you’re an actor. You don’t have to be an actress. As far as a glass ceiling, I feel that all you can do is give it your absolute best with whatever gifts the universe has given you. And if you make it in some way that other people can recognize, that’s fine. But even if you don’t quote-unquote make it, you’re fine, if you’ve given it your whole heart and soul. You’re totally in sync with your purpose and with the universe. And that’s fine.

KW: Patricia also says, you learned to read at a very young age. You were in the first grade when you were four years-old. Illiteracy is still an ongoing issue around the world. Do you think that exposing a child as early as possible to education can be a determinant in decreasing the level of illiteracy on a global scale?

AW: I know from having had a child, and from having been a child myself, that children will copy you. So, the best way to get them to read, is to read. The best way to get them to do anything is to do it yourself, and they will absolutely copy you. That way, you don’t have to worry about what’s supposedly age appropriate, a child will pick something up when the child is ready.

KW: It was heartbreaking in *Beauty in Truth* to hear you talk about being estranged from your daughter. It was very touching.

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