



THE GIFT OF ANCIENT STORYTELLERS: AN INTRODUCTORY READING OF CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE'S BODY OF WORK.

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Abstract

*This paper introduces and summarizes seven major works written by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie from her first novel, *Half of a Yellow Sun* up to her memoir *Notes on Grief*. The understanding of every book's history, editor, publisher, number of pages and content is the key point discussed in this article. The stress being put on her central theme and female characters, the paper traces a visible line between the author's real world and fictional one.*

Key Words: *Grief, Manifesto, Diaspora, Nigeria, and War.*

1. Purple Hibiscus

Purple Hibiscus is a debut novel of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. It was firstly published by *Algonquin Books/Kachifo Limited* in October 2003. It is a 307 pages-book with ISBN 9780007189885. The book is set in postcolonial Nigeria, the author's country beset by political instability and economic difficulties.

It has received the following honors:

- Hurston-Wright Legacy Award 2004 (Best Debut Fiction Category)
- Commonwealth Writers' Prize 2005: Best First Book (Africa)
- Commonwealth Writers' Prize 2005: Best First Book (overall)
- Shortlisted for the Orange Prize for Fiction 2004
- Longlisted for the Booker Prize 2004
- Nominated for the YALSA (Young Adult Library Services Association)
- Best Books for Young Adults Award (2004)
- Shortlisted for the John Llewellyn Rhys Prize 2004/2005 ("The Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie Website – Awards" (<http://www.l3.ulg.ac.be/adichie/cnaawards.html>) The Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie Website. Retrieved 2008-03-15.

Purple Hibiscus' setting takes place in Enugu, a city in post-colonial Nigeria, and is narrated by the main character, Kambili Achike, in first person point of view. Kambili describes her city, family and father who is the antagonist of the story.

The novel is about Kambili's father, Papa (Eugene Achike) a strict authoritarian man whose strict adherence to Catholicism overshadows his paternal love. He could easily punish his wife, Mama (Beatrice Achike), and his children when they fail to live up to his impossibly high standards but his reputation outside his house was not well praised by his political friends. He even stops visiting his biological father and warns his children to visit his family under the pretext that they are not Christianized (Bell-Gam, Ruby A.: 2004).

Adichie's first novel is very meaningful by its sense of pointing the finger at religious hypocrisy between Christianized African political figures. The feminism theme in the book is widely discussed. The author's unhappiness is seen when the patriarchal family

and rulers are making women victims, ill-treated and not being respected as full human being simply because they are married (Themes Explored in Purple Hibiscus - 2095 Words: 2018). The feminism and writing revolt of Adichie has well started in this novel.

In the lines below, Adichie reveals the attitude of the father to Kambili's mother, in front of the two kids:

*"Let me stay in the car and wait, biko," Mama said, leaning against the Mercedes. "I feel vomit in my throat."
Papa turned to stare at her. I held my breath. It seemed a long moment, but it might have been only seconds.
"Are you sure you want to stay in the car?" Papa asked.
Mama was looking down; her hands were placed on her belly, to hold the wrapper from untying itself or to keep her bread and tea breakfast down. "My body does not feel right," she mumbled.
"I asked if you were sure you wanted to stay in the car."
Mama looked up. "I'll come with you. It's really not that bad." (Purple Hibiscus, 22)*

The novel ends with a kind of rebellion in house. Children become against their father's dictatorship against them and their mother.

2. *Half of a Yellow Sun*

Adichie's second novel is among few books that trace the events that shook Africa during the early and late 1960s, mainly the period when the Nigerian Civil War took place. In crafting her narration, Adichie takes a beautifully anachronistic approach, flowing back and forth in time to tell the tale of those affected by war. The first and third major portions of the book are devoted to the early 1960s, while the late 1960s are depicted in the second and fourth portions (Guardians: 2012).

The *Half of a Yellow Sun* was published in 2007 by Nigeria 4th Estate. It is a book of 448 pages published with ISBN number: 978-0-00720028-3. Its Chimamanda's second book after "Purple Hibiscus". The title of the book "Half of a Yellow Sun" is, asserts Faith Nyawira (2018:1), from the emblem of Biafra. The novel tells a heart wrenching story of love, resilience and betrayal during the Biafran war through the perspectives of Olanna, Ugwu and Richard. The major theme in the novel is war; because it revolves around the Nigerian Civil war also called the "Biafran war" which started on 6 July 1967 and ended on 13 January 1970. besides war, other themes include marriage, politics, identity, western journalism and role of westerners in post colonial Africa are also discussed in the book (Faith Nyawira 2018:3).

The novel's plot revolves around two sisters ,Olanna and Kainene who are from an elite

family. The return to Nigeria after their education abroad. Physically and personality wise very dissimilar, their relationship suffers mistrust and betrayal. They both fall in love, Olanna becomes a mistress to Odenigbo, a Pan-africanist intellectual who teaches at a university, while Kainene forms a relationship with Richard a shy and awkward Englishman who is a writer. The war and its conflicts throws the four into a world they never expected along with Ugwu who is Odenigbo's houseboy.

Half of a Yellow Sun features simplistic words, empathetic writing, metaphorically dominated plots, and third-person perspective to drive the story. Chimamanda's use of the main characters as story drivers proved incredibly beneficial as it created a diversified storytelling perspective. The ending of 'Half of a Yellow Sun' creates a feeling of euphoria and sadness. Euphoria because the main characters had their lives impacted positively by the war. Sadness, though the characters survived the war, they were never the same joy-filled happy people they were before the war started; this makes 'Half of a Yellow Sun' an even mix of tragedy and comedy (All Books Markers 2018). Speaking about the book characters, Joshua Ehiosun (2020) wrote:

Separately, each character in Chimamanda's novel had hopes, dreams, ambitions, and regrets that haunted them before and after the war ended. Though the reader gets a plot hole related to Kainene, it only adds the feeling of optimism or pessimism depending on the reader.

The book has received many critics and prizes among which:

- In a review for The Seattle Times, Mary Brennan called the book "a sweeping story that provides both a harrowing history lesson and an engagingly human narrative" (Brennan, Mary 2006)
- Half of a Yellow Sun received the 2007 Women's Prize for Fiction. The award is given annually for the best original full-length novel written by a woman in English; Adichie's prize amounted to £30,000 (Reynolds, Nigel 2007).
- The novel was well received by critics and included in the New York Times's "100 Most Notable Books of the Year". (New York Times. 22 November 2006. Retrieved 18 March 2008)
- The New York Times had a more mixed review of the book, noting that "at times Adichie's writing is too straightforward, the novel's pace too slack" but also that "whenever she touches on her favorite themes—loyalty and betrayal—her prose thrums with life."

The Washington Post states:

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie certainly lives up to the hype in her second novel, Half a Yellow Sun. She wowed us with this transcendent tale about war, loyalty, brutality, and love in modern Africa.

It's a measure of Adichie's mastery of small things – and of the mess the world is in – that we see that man arrive, in country after country, again and again and again.”(Barnes & Noble: 2010)

Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe commented:

"We do not usually associate wisdom with beginners, but here is a new writer endowed with the gift of ancient storytellers," and said about Adichie: "She is fearless, or she would not have taken on the intimidating horror of Nigeria's civil war."(Random House. Retrieved 27 July 2008).

In 2019, *Half of a Yellow Sun* was ranked by The Guardian as the 10th best book since 2000 (The Guardian. 21 September 2019). On 5 November 2019, the BBC News included *Half of a Yellow Sun* on its list of the 100 most influential novels (BBC News. 5 November 2019).

In November 2020, *Half of a Yellow Sun* was voted the best book to have won the Women's Prize for Fiction in its 25-year history (BBC News. 12 November 2020).

In 2022, *Half of a Yellow Sun* was included on the "Big Jubilee Read" list of 70 books by Commonwealth authors, selected to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of Elizabeth II (The Big Jubilee Read 2022) A film adaptation written by playwright Biyi Bandele (BBC News, 18 July 2008. Retrieved 4 July 2010) premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival in late 2013, and had its worldwide release in 2014. The film stars Chiwetel Ejiofor and Thandiwe Newton (Jenny Soffel 2013).

3. *Americanah*

Americanah is the third novel of the author published by Alfred A. Knopf in May 2013. It contains 608 pages with ISBN 978-0-307-96212-6. Just as her first two novels, *Americanah*'s protagonist is a female character. For the first time, Adichie writes beyond her central theme-feminist- to discuss race and color issues in United States.

The story's setting is shared between Nigeria, United States and United Kingdom where her characters' stories and lives are shared. It is also Adichie's first work which discusses the theme of Diaspora and migration.

Ifemelu, the protagonist and story teller is a young woman from Nigeria who left her country's University for endless strikes to study in United States. The novel begins as she takes the train from Princeton, New Jersey, the posh university town where she has a fellowship as a writer, to Trenton, New Jersey, a nearby city that is much poorer, to

get braids done before returning to Nigeria. As she sits in the salon, she reminisces and recounts pieces of her life in Nigeria as a child; her struggles with culture, language, money, and hair in the United States; and two relationships since emigrating that could never measure up to her first love with a young man named Obinze (All Books Readers Review: 2017).

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In United States, the young Nigerian Ifemelu fell in love with a university lecturer after having faced a very tough financial situation which made her hate herself, her boyfriend, Obinze, her family and even her life. In the same time Obinze tried to write, to call to mail her days and nights without success. He went to United Kingdom where he was expelled by Immigration service.

When Ifemelu returns to Nigeria after some delay due to a suicide attempt made by her beloved cousin Dike, she and Obinze have decided where their friendship and love stand. Though Obinze faces a tough decision due to having a wife and young daughter, in the end he chooses to pursue a relationship with Ifemelu no matter the cost.

The book didn't end, as most critic acknowledge. Adichie's speech confirms that most of her books have never reached the end. All readers could be disappointed by the end of the story. Nothing is written to clarify whether or not Obinze and Ifemelu got marriage.

- *Americanah* was selected as one of the 10 Best Books of 2013 by the editors of the New York Times Book Review (Marwala Tshildizi: 2020).
- *Americanah* won the 2013 National Book Critic Circle Award for fiction (New York Times: 2013)
- It was shortlisted for the 2014 Baileys Women's Prize for Fiction of the United Kingdom (Brown Mark 2014).
- In 2013 the Chicago Tribune awarded the author its Heartland award for Fiction (Taylor Elizabeth: 2013)
- In March 2017, *Americanah* was picked as the winner for the "One Book, One New York"(Weller Chris: 2017)

4. *We Should All Be Feminists*

We Should All Be Feminists is an Essay of 64 pages published in 2014 by Fourth Estate in Nigeria under the ISBN number: 978-00081152272.

She begins the book by recalling her early experiences of sexism and anti-feminism. She remembers an argument that she had with her childhood friend **Okoloma**, in which he called her a "feminist":

*"It was not a compliment. I could tell by his **tone** [...]"*

Adichie then remembers later episodes in her life, in which she was warned—often by friends or well-meaning strangers—against being a feminist. Such warnings made it clear to her that the word "feminist" implied an angry, bitter woman:

*“You hate men, you hate bras, you hate African **culture**, you think women should always be in charge [...]”.*

Adichie discusses the injustice of societal expectations for women, both in African culture and in the world at large. She observes that although the world has slightly more women than men, men still hold most positions of power. She posits that the men’s dominance is based on an outdated notion of superior physical strength indicating fitness to lead, and that:

*“[we] have evolved. But our ideas of **gender** have not evolved very much”*

She recalls episodes from her own life—and from the lives of her female friends—that illustrate this point.

She remembers how, as a young girl in Nigeria, she was deprived of the opportunity to be her class monitor simply because she was a girl. In addition, she notes that Nigerian taxi drivers and waiters regularly ignore her and treat her as an appendage to her male friends. She tells us that her American female friends have experienced a similar social pressure to be compliant and invisible, even when they hold positions of power:

“What struck me [...] is how invested they are in being ‘liked’”

Adichie suggests that boys and girls are taught inflexible gender roles, a situation that hurts both sexes equally. Boys are raised to be aggressive and stoic, while girls are raised to please boys and to consider marriage as a central goal. She recalls times when she was warned against appearing too aggressive and outspoken, because she might frighten prospective husbands, and she shares stories of female friends—both married and unmarried—who have had to efface themselves to please men.

One single friend, she tells us, sold her house so that she would appear less intimidatingly self-reliant; another married friend grew weary of pretending to enjoy cooking another married friend grew weary of pretending to enjoy cooking more than she did. Adichie acknowledges that she’s angry over this situation but that her anger doesn’t preclude hope:

“Anger has a long history of positive change...I believe deeply in the ability of human beings to remake themselves for the better”

She suggests that in raising children, we focus more on their innate abilities and less on their gender characteristics:

“What if we focus on interest instead of gender?” (35).

Adichie acknowledges that the topic of gender makes many people uncomfortable and that they make various arguments to deflect the topic. One such argument is the

anthropological argument: those studies of apes show that the female sex is inherently submissive.

Adichie refutes this argument by observing that “[we] are not apes. Apes also live in trees and eat earthworms. We do not”. Another argument—one that Adichie says her male friends have often made—is that feminists should understand themselves as human beings first and as women second. Adichie points out that this argument erases her own experience of injustice:

“[T]here are particular things that have happened to me in the world because I am a woman”

In addition, she states that a focus on these injustices is appropriate because women—just as much as her Black male friends—have been historically oppressed. To the argument that women are traditionally submissive in her Nigerian culture, Adichie responds that “culture does not make people. People make culture”. She points out that culture is always evolving and that it ultimately exists to serve human beings, rather than the other way around.

At the essay’s end, Adichie returns to the memory of her childhood friend Okoloma calling her a feminist. She provides a dictionary definition of the word “feminist”: that a feminist is simply someone who believes in the equality of the sexes. She affirms that she’s indeed a feminist, according to this definition, and posits that “[m]ore of us should reclaim that word”. She tells us that her **great grandmother**, who never knew the word “feminist,” still fit the description of one, as does her brother Kene, “who is also a kind, good-looking and very masculine young man”.

The book has received many critics and awards:

- Rupert Hawksley said: "it just might be the most important book you read all year" in The Telegraph(Rupert Hawksley : 2014) The Independent selected it as a book of the year, for it "would be the book I'd press into the hands of girls and boys, as an inspiration for a future 'world of happier men and happier women who are truer to themselves'"(Arifa Akbar: 2014)
- In December 2015, the Swedish Women's Lobby and publisher Albert Bonniers revealed the book is to be distributed to every 16-year-old high school student in Sweden, with the intention that it will "work as a stepping stone for a discussion about gender equality and feminism"(Laura Wagner: 2018).
- In September 2016, designer Maria Grazia Chiuri, the first female creative director in the 70-year history of the fashion house Dior, at her premiere show for the brand featured a T-shirt bearing the statement: "We Should All

Be Feminists"(Steff Yotka: 2016) The essay is excerpted in Margaret Busby's 2019 anthology *New Daughters of Africa*.

5. *The Thing Around Your Neck*

The Thing Around Your Neck is a short story collection published in United States by Alfred A. Knopf and in United Kingdom by Fourth Estate in 2009. It is a book of 300 pages with ISBN number: 978-0-307-37523-0.

The book is a collection of twelve individual short stories. Though the stories do not share any of the same characters or plot, they are woven together by their common themes.

- *Cell One*

Follows the story of a Nigerian boy named Nnamabia. Told from his sister's point of view, the story highlights the corrupt Nigerian justice system. Although Nnamabia is mistreated while imprisoned, his parents are able to bribe the police in order for him to receive preferential treatment. The narrator grows increasingly frustrated at her brother's male privilege, and she retaliates against her parents for showing favoritism towards her guilty brother. The prison experience is incredibly formative for Nnamabia. Though he once relied on his charm, masculinity, and social class advantages, his privileged worldview changes forever.

- *Imitation*

It is set in the suburbs of Philadelphia. The protagonist, Nkem, must grapple with the hardships of immigrating to the United States from Nigeria. Nkem's husband, Obiora, only visits Nkem and their children for two months every year. When Nkem hears that Obiora has a new girlfriend in Nigeria, she must learn to set limits and advocate for herself in her marriage.

- *A Private Experience*

It tells the story of a woman named Chika and an unnamed Hausa woman after a riot over religious differences breaks out in Kano, Nigeria. The Hausa woman offers Chika shelter in her store, and the women's religious and class differences become evident. Despite the religious and ethnic turmoil that aims to divide them, the two women from different backgrounds demonstrate sympathy and understanding toward each other.

- ***Ghosts***

Is chronicles the aging process of professor James Nwoye. James is startled when he runs into Ikenna Okaro, a colleague who he previously believed had died years ago, on the Nsukka campus. The two discuss what has happened to them in their years apart. Ikenna explains how he suffered during the country's political revolution, and why he fled to Sweden. James tells Ikenna that although his wife, Ebere, has been dead for many years, her ghost visits him often and massages lotion into his skin.

- ***On Monday of Last Week***

The narrator Kamara joins her husband, Tobechei, in Philadelphia after living in Nigeria. Kamara has a difficult time adjusting to life in the United States, and she finds that her relationship with Tobechei is not as strong as she thought it was. In order to support herself while waiting for her green card, she gets hired as a nanny for a biracial family. Neil, the child's Jewish father, is neurotic and obsessive about his young son, Josh. Kamara becomes intrigued by Josh's elusive mother, Tracy, a painter who spends her time working in the basement. After Tracy expresses her desire to paint Kamara nude, Kamara becomes obsessed with and attracted to her.

- ***Jumping Monkey Hill***

Ujunwa, a young Nigerian writer, attends a writing workshop at Jumping Monkey Hill. The writer's retreat is sponsored by Edward Campbell, a British scholar who clearly fetishizes African culture. Each writer chosen for the retreat represents their home nation. Ujunwa grows frustrated at Edward's attitude and judgment. After Ujunwa workshops her short story about a woman working at a bank, Edward critiques her plot for being "implausible." This prompts Ujunwa to retaliate against Edward's problematic behavior.

- ***The Thing Around Your Neck***

Is told from the second-person perspective. The female narrator, Akunna, wins the American visa lottery and moves from Nigeria to Maine. Akunna has a difficult adjustment to rural American life. One evening, her uncle sexually assaults her, and she leaves on a one-way bus ticket to Connecticut. There, she works as a waitress and struggles to make ends meet. One day, a young white man comes to the restaurant. He has traveled to Africa before, and he shows that he is interested in Akunna's life and background. Akunna and the boy begin to date, but she realizes the differences between herself and the boy. Although he is somewhat knowledgeable about non-Western countries, he romanticizes the lives of poor, foreign populations.

Akunna realizes that he is blindingly oblivious about his privilege. Akunna receives a

letter from her family notifying her that her father has passed away. She flies back to Nigeria, and it is unsure whether she will return to America or to her relationship.

- ***The American Embassy***

Is the story of an unnamed narrator who visits the American embassy in Nigeria in hopes of receiving an asylum visa. The narrator is still reeling from the death of her four-year-old son, Ugonna, who was killed by government officials earlier in the week. The narrator's husband, a reporter, published a controversial article that angered the government. As a result, her husband fled the country and the officials killed their son instead. People advise the narrator to speak about the brutality of Ugonna's death so that she can be granted the asylum visa. However, during her embassy interview, the narrator realizes that she would rather stay in Nigeria and plant flowers on Ugonna's grave. She decides not to "use" his death to flee the country.

- ***The Shivering***

The story takes place in Princeton, New Jersey. After hearing about a deadly plane crash in Nigeria, Ukamaka worries about the well-being of her ex-boyfriend, Udenna. She hears a knock on the door, and she is greeted by Chinedu, another Nigerian man who lives in her building. Ukamaka hears that Udenna is safe, but the two fail to reignite contact. Chinedu and Ukamaka become friends, and Ukamaka finds that she can speak at lengths to Chinedu about her breakup and he is receptive. Chinedu reveals that he had a boyfriend in Nigeria. One day, the two friends have a fight about Ukamaka's selfish behavior. They go for weeks without speaking, until Ukamaka knocks on Chinedu's door. Chinedu reveals that he is not a graduate student at Princeton, but rather he is hiding from the government because his visa expired. Ukamaka and Chinedu go to mass together, and Ukamaka vows to help Chinedu through his hardships.

- ***The Arrangers of Marriage***

A new wife moves to New York City with her husband. The two have an arranged marriage. Following the move, she realizes that her husband does not accept her Nigerian identity. With the help of a new friend in the building, Chinaza learns to stand up for herself.

- ***Tomorrow Is Too Far***

Is the story of a young woman as she reminisces about a summer she spent in Nigeria eighteen years ago. As children, she and her brother would go to visit her father's mother, "Grandmama," in Nigeria every summer. They pass time with their cousin, Dozie, whom the narrator also has a crush on. The narrator is often made to feel inferior

to her older brother by her parents and Grandmama. Grandmama especially favors the narrator's brother, since he will carry on the family name. The narrator is overcome with feelings of jealousy, and she wants to be given attention from her family. One afternoon, she challenges her brother to climb one of the fruit trees in her grandmother's backyard. She then startles him, causing him to slip and fall to his death.

She never intended for her brother to die, and the event causes her to retreat from her family. Her parents divorce, and she doesn't visit Nigeria or see Dozie again until eighteen years later.

- *The Headstrong Historian*

Is a story about the life of a woman named Nwambga whose husband was killed by his cousins. She is desperate to change the course of her life, and she sends her son to Catholic school to avoid any problems with her family. Her son ends up rejecting his mother's traditional Nigerian customs, which deeply hurts Nwambga. Years later, her son has a daughter named Grace. Nwambga realizes that Grace carries the spirit of her husband, and she encourages Grace to embrace traditional Nigerian culture. Grace attends college and publishes books about Nigerian history. At the end of the story, Grace changes her name to Afemefuna, the Nigerian name given to her by her grandmother.

6. *Dear Ijeawele or a Feminism Manifesto in Fifteen Suggestions*

Dear Ijeawele is an epistolary manifesto composed of 15 suggestions. The book originated from a letter Chimamanda wrote to her friend, Ijeawele, who just after giving birth to a baby girl, she asked Adichie for advice on how to raise her to be a feminist. Adichie's response forms the basis of this manifesto, which was first published by Knopf Publishers in 2017.

The book's main ideas are summarized in the following suggestions:

Suggestion 1: "Be a full person" (9).

The first suggestion is a warning to mothers not to identify too strongly with the role of motherhood. There is nothing intrinsically wrong with motherhood. Motherhood can be a beautiful thing, and it's a legitimate choice for feminist women to make. However, there is a tendency for women to get so involved in the role of mother that it comes to completely define their lives. This is a problem, both for mothers and their daughters (Super Summary 2018: 7).

Suggestion 2: "Do it together" (12).

This suggestion addresses the division of labor between parents in a heterosexual

relationship. Adichie advises that fathers ought to share equally in domestic and child-raising responsibilities. This suggestion follows directly from the first because when fathers get more involved in parenting, mothers have greater freedom to pursue other activities.

Additionally, it's also good for daughters to see male role models engaging in typically non-masculine activities, such as cooking, cleaning, and nurturing (Super Summary 2018: 12).

Suggestion 3: “Teach her that the idea of ‘gender roles’ is absolute nonsense” (14).

This is the most theoretically heavy portion of the book. It introduces the concept of gender roles and discusses to what extent a culture constructs gender by conditioning men and women to behave differently.

We're often told that the reason men and women behave as they do is because of their gender: Men are active, rational, and industrious because they're men; Women are passive, emotional, and caring because they're women. We're told that our gender dictates how we will perform at certain tasks or react in certain situations. Our gender, essentially, defines who we are and limits what we're capable of as individuals (Super Summary 2018: 22).

Suggestion 4: “Beware the danger of what I call Feminism Lite” (21).

This suggestion is a warning to be wary of false friends and also never to make compromises when it comes to female equality. **Feminism Lite** is a concept coined by the author. It refers to attitudes held by men and women alike that seem to be feminist in spirit but are actually premised on misogynistic ideas about women. In Adichie's actually premised on misogynistic ideas about women (Super Summary 2018: 24).

Suggestion 5: “Teach Chizalum to read” (25).

It's important to teach your daughter to read—and, not only to read but to love reading. Reading will improve her knowledge, it will help her to understand and question the world around her, and it will develop her skills and personality. In short, reading is the cornerstone of any genuine education, and it's an essential ingredient in the development of fully-fledged subjectivity (Super Summary 2018: 30).

Suggestion 6: “Teach her to question Language” (26).

Language is important for feminists because it is one of the ways a culture constructs and disseminates a particular view of women and the role they ought to inhabit. As the author argues, both the ideas expressed using language as well as the very words themselves have the power to reinforce gender roles. For example, when a parent calls their daughter “princess,” they may be reinforcing certain gendered expectations of behavior. That's because the word “princess” is not a neutral term—it's a term loaded

with assumptions and cultural associations Princesses are usually presented in our culture as associations. Princesses are usually presented in our culture as passive damsels in distress who need men to come and save them (Super Summary 2018: 37).

Suggestion 7: “Never speak of marriage as an achievement” (30).

This suggestion is about redressing an imbalance in the way we condition girls and boys to think about marriage. Girls and boys are conditioned to value marriage differently. Girls are taught that marriage is an achievement. They are taught that marriage is something they ought to aspire to—that it’s a part of their destiny as women. If they don’t get married, it’s implied that they’ve failed in their role (Super Summary 2018: 45).

Suggestion 8: “Teach her to reject likeability” (36).

This point is about authenticity and the need to teach your daughter to make decisions for herself “Rejecting likability” means refusing to make decisions for herself. Rejecting likability means refusing to mold yourself into an image that other people expect or want from you just to please them. The point is not that your daughter shouldn’t care at all what others think of her, but simply that being liked should not be a priority over being herself (Super Summary 2018: 50).

Suggestion 9: “Give Chizalum a sense of identity” (39).

This is the most specific suggestion on the list, as it addresses Chizalum’s Igbo heritage directly. It also speaks to the specific situation of people of color growing up in a world where images of whiteness dominate popular culture, and where images of African people and Blackness are often connected with negative stereotyping (Super Summary 2018: 57).

Suggestion 10: “Be deliberate about how you engage with her appearance” (41).

This suggestion discusses what you can do to help your daughter cope with the inevitable body-image insecurities that the world thrusts upon girls. One very simple and actionable piece of advice is to encourage your daughter to do sports—and keep doing it after puberty arrives. Exercise will boost her self-esteem, and it will also help her be a more active person. Being active in a sport will teach her to be louder, to take up space, and to use her muscles more (Super Summary 2018: 67).

Suggestion 11: “Teach her to question our culture’s selective use of biology as ‘reasons’ for social norms” (48).

This section links up with the discussion of gender roles in suggestion 3. It is very common for proponents of “traditional” gender roles to justify them on the basis of

biological differences between men and women. The assumption they make is that gender roles are in some way “natural” rather than purely products of society (Super Summary 2018: 75).

Suggestion 12: “Talk to her about sex and start early” (50).

This suggestion is essentially about ensuring your daughter has a quality sex education—one that’s both informative and doesn’t connect sexuality with shame. Traditional sex education for girls invariably connects sex to shame, and this is true all over the world. The author recounts how when she was supposed to learn about sex in school recounts how, when she was supposed to learn about sex in school, instead she was told “vague semi-threats about how ‘talking to boys’ would end up with us being pregnant and disgraced” (50). Although this form of sex education is presented as a way of protecting girls, the truth is that it has nothing to do with girls’ welfare. The real reason we connect female sexuality to shame is control. Women’s sexuality must be controlled in order to protect the honor and appetites of the men around them. Shame is a vestige from when women were the mere property of men (Super Summary 2018: 80).

Suggestion 13: “Romance will happen, so be on board” (54).

As with sexuality, you ought to be open and accepting of your daughter’s choices when it comes to love as well. Simply being available to give advice and talk through problems is the best thing you can do as a parent. You don’t need to be your daughter’s best friend, just be there for her when she needs it (Super Summary 2018: 87).

Suggestion 14: “In teaching her about oppression, be careful not to turn the oppressed into saints” (58).

There is a tendency in discourses on inequality to overcompensate for injustice by idealizing the oppressed group, and this is true of the **discourse** on gender, too. Sometimes, it’s just assumed that, owing to their inferior position, women must automatically have the moral high ground over men. This may explain why some proponents of women’s rights feel the need to venerate women’s character as more virtuous than men’s (Super Summary 2018: 93).

Suggestion 15: “Teach her about difference” (59).

This suggestion encompasses both a broad lesson about the nature of the world and a more specific lesson in parenting. The more philosophical point is this: Difference—meaning diversity among people—is the reality of our world. There are almost no constants across all human beings. People differ in their bodies, their preferences, their desires, their worldviews, their language, and their way of life—and the list goes on (Super Summary 2018: 100).

7. *Notes On Grief*

Notes on Grief is a memoir Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie wrote about events that characterized her father's death. This small book of 80 pages published on 11th May, 2021 by Random House of Canada is very meaningful for the writer's souvenir for the man who helped her achieve her life goals. The memoir is presented in thirty short sections in which all sorrow and grief that surrounded the death of Professor James Nwoye Adichie is written.

Conclusion

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's life links her to her writings, philosophy and feminism. It is hard to understand why Adichie writes about race, about feminism, about women empowerment and about love without having got a look at her personal life, family life, her society, history and culture. The body of work written by this famous African writer could be said, to borrow Mongbolo Ngalima's words-half-bibliography- in the sense that she writes about herself, her people, her friends, her family, her society, her history, her problems, in one word, she writes directly or indirectly about her experience.

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