UNIBEN ENGLISH AND LITERATURE JOURNALS
Department of English and Literature
BENIN JOURNAL OF LITERARY STUDIES (BJLS)

https:unibenenljournals.com
ISSN (print): 1118-5538

Vol. 3, pp. 66-76, 2025

"FEMALE ABERRATION" AND GENDER POWER RELATIONS IN IGBO CULTURE IN FLORA NWAPA'S *EFURU*

Lilian Onyeiwu

Abstract

This article examines the construction of "female aberration" and gender power relations in Igbo culture in Flora Nwapa's *Efuru*. While existing scholarship has largely engaged this text through feminist and womanist paradigms, this study advances social exchange theory and Lacan's concept of desire. It argues that notions of aberration, otherness, and deviance are culturally constituted categories embedded within Igbo cultural moral and social codes. The article further argues that desire functions as a catalyst in the conflicts in the novel. The protagonist's struggle to assert herself as a desiring subject and an autonomous agent shifts her from positions of victimhood to empowerment. Through close textual analysis, the article demonstrates that power relations in the narrative assume triangular configurations, with the female protagonist negotiating tradition, patriarchy, and personal desire. The novel reconfigures Igbo cultural space as dynamic and contested, opening possibilities for female self-determination within, rather than outside, tradition.

Keywords: "female aberration," gender power relations, patriarchy, desire, *Efuru*

Lilian Onyeiwu
Department of English and Literature,
University of Benin, Benin City.
email: lilian.onyeiwu@uniben.edu

Introduction

Many Igbo women writers, from first generation to third generation writers, have engaged gender issues to challenge patriarchy and to give voice to disempowered women in both traditional Igbo society and modern Nigerian society. Flora Nwapa represents one of the writers contesting gender subjugation in Igbo cultural space, especially what is described here as "female aberration." This can be said to refer to certain classes of women in Igbo culture who are considered as social deviants or aberrations in terms of their inability to fulfil certain traditional roles, or in terms of breaking or resisting a social norm. Childless women or women without male children, for instance, may be considered aberrations, not necessarily by committing an abomination or a criminal act but by not fulfilling a traditional role even when such occurrence is based on circumstances rather than choice. Although both criminal and non-criminal actions are considered deviant, Sherry Thompson notes that traditional "perceptions often associate deviant behaviour predominantly with males, particularly in criminal contexts." Thus, notions of aberration, otherness, and deviance are culturally constructed. They are fundamentally sustained through embedded moral and social codes.

This article affirms the idea of Efuru as an *authentic* Igbo woman who can be likened to tragic or revolutionary characters whose desires and choices have always rewritten their destinies. It establishes that the idea of aberration or social exclusion is culturally constructed based on a people's moral and social codes, codes that sustain gendered hierarchies and that often initiate gender power relations. Diana Koester observes that gender shapes power relations at all levels of society. This suggests the interrelation between gender and power. Also, European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) describes gender power relations as "ways in which gender shapes the distributions of power at all levels of society." They note that one of "the most persistent patterns in the distribution of power is that of inequalities between women and men. The set of roles, behaviours and attitudes that societies define as appropriate for women and men ('gender') can be the cause, consequence and mechanism of power relations, from intimate sphere of the household to the highest levels of political decision-making." This pattern of inequality in the distribution of power, whether at the familial or communal sphere, plays out in *Efuru*. Efuru, the eponymous character, struggles for agency in a culture that considers her as an aberration due to her *revolutionary* desire and choice, and her inability to have children like other women. Her desire also functions as a catalyst that drives the conflicts in the narrative.

The scholars Káyòdé O. Ógúnfolábí, Ojel Clara Anidi, and Idriss Garba Musa and Stephen Ayok Sharon note that Nwapa assumes a feminist position in her presentation of women in her novels. Ógúnfolábí argues that motherhood is not the determinant of a woman's success, that *Efuru* demonstrates that there are other dimensions of social existence from which women can find fulfilment. He asserts that *Efuru* de-mythologies motherhood rather than idealizing it. Musa and Sharon argue that Nwapa critiques the restrictive gender norms that define womanhood through marriage, childbearing, and submission to male authority by offering a nuanced portrayal of African womanhood that transcends traditional narratives. In contrast, Anidi examines toxic masculinity in the novel, arguing that the two leading male

characters, Adizua and Eneberi, embody the idea of toxic masculinity, that is, men with troubling behaviour who require therapy to overcome their violence, lack of engagement in family life or employment. Iheanyichukwu Duruoha criticizes Nwapa's representation of Igbo culture, noting that she is one of the Igbo writers who "do not competently communicate the Igbo culture, as a result of faults in technique and in the use of language" (185). However, Sabine Jell-Bahlsen points out that Efuru's character does not represent the image of an African woman. She asserts that Nwapa's representation of Uhamiri, the water goddess in *Efuru,* is inconsistent with the reality of her divine nature because in Igbo cosmology, women worship Uhamiri (also known as mammywater) because she is "thought to govern fertility" (30). Furthermore, Mary D. Mears claims that Nwapa's female characters deal with many voices and choices as "they seek both independence and a communal cohesiveness" in a changing world (iv). Thus, from available literature, no writer has explored desire as central in the conflicts in the novel. The protagonist's struggle to assert herself as a desiring subject and autonomous agent shifts her from positions of victimhood to empowerment.

Social Exchange Relations and Lacan's Concept of Desire

Social exchange relations theory postulates that every human interaction aims at maximizing the most favourable outcomes for the self. Every interaction is entered into in the hope that the rewards or benefits outweigh the costs and pitfalls, which means that if the outcome is favourable to the self, the person will remain in that relationship, but if the outcome falls beneath the person's expectation, the person will quit that relationship and seek for an alternative. Shari Parsons Miller notes that "individuals are likely to shift their social engagements toward relationships that offer the most favorable balance of rewards and costs." However, if one continues to be in a relationship where the outcome does not meet that individual's expectation, it is because there may be no alternatives potentially more rewarding than the individual's present relationship. Therefore, an individual can only quit a relationship if she or he perceives that the outcome outside the immediate relationship is greater. This means that the more attractive a relationship is, the more stability is guaranteed.

In marital relationship within the context of social exchange theory, Paul Nakonezny and Wayne Denton note that "social exchange theory portents that individuals in relationships are motivated by the goodness of outcomes they are expected to bring …" (404). Therefore, every relationship involves rewards and costs, including marital and familial relationships. They state that "costs are the factors that inhibit or deter a performance of a sequence of behaviours within a marriage, whereas rewards are the pleasures, satisfactions, and gratifications that a person enjoys within a marriage …" (402). They posit therefore that "marital exchange relationships can be conceptualized as the cyclical patterns of transactions of valued resources, tangible or intangible, between partners and the rewards and costs associated with such transactions, which culminate in dyadic or individual outcomes of profit or loss …" (403). Thus, married couples are more likely to be satisfied with their marriage if they receive favourable reward/cost outcomes from each other (404). They stay together if the perceived rewards and costs are attractive and favourable. Nakonezny and Denton argue that married couples will stay together in what they describe as "marital solidarity," because 'the partner's attraction to the relationship depends on the assessed profit of

the relationship relative to the partner's comparison level' (404). Thus "the greater the degree of attraction … the greater the marital solidarity" (404). A partner's dependence on a marital relationship occurs when the partner's rewards and costs are favourable within the existing relationship, or if the comparison level of alternative outside the relationship is unfavourable. Thus, "the more rewarding a partner's alternatives …, the less is a partner's dependence" (405). In social exchange relationship, the individual who is dependent on his/her partner accords control or power to the partner. This is to say that the greater the resources of one partner, the more power and control he/she exercises over the partner with less resource.

Nakonezny and Denton identify two ways of exercising marital power in social exchange within a marital relationship. In the first place they assert that "social exchange within a marital relationship involves the transference of resources," which is defined as "'an ability, possession, or other attribute of an actor [partner] giving him [or her] the capacity to reward or punish another specified actor [partner]'" (405, square brackets in original). The partner with greater resources has the capacity to punish or reward the partner with less resource. Thus, the partner that is capable of punishing or rewarding the other partner has "marital power" over that partner. On the other hand, if the level of commitment between the partners is asymmetrical, the partner with the least level of commitment gains power over the partner with higher commitment. Thus "the partner with the least commitment has the greatest power" (406). Undeniably, social exchange relations involve a power struggle.

Desire, on the other hand, is generally understood as sexual desire or a passion for something. In psychoanalytic literary criticism, desire has been influenced by Jacques Lacan's theory. Lacan's theory is basically a re-reading of Freud; he radically re-conceptualizes Freudianism using principles of linguistics and structuralism. For Freud, according to Ruth Parkin-Gounelas, desire "was not a term [he] used in any central way," rather it is his assertion that the drive is arbitrary that influences Lacan's conceptualization of desire (82). What constitutes desire for Lacan is lack. Bruce Fink notes that lack, in Lacan's work, means "something which is missing" (52). This refers basically to the mother, although the "Other" is also inclusive. It is the absence/presence of the mother which allows the child to fill its lack through language and to articulate its desire, that is, to occupy its position in language. Thus, for Lacan, "[l]ack and desire are coextensive" (Fink 54). Lack is what makes the child desire, for without lack, "the subject can never come into being, and the whole efflorescence of the dialectic of desire is squashed" (Fink 103).

Similarly, Alan Sheridan posits that desire, for Lacan, "is not an appetite: it is essentially excentric and insatiable" (278) and bound to repeat itself. Moreover, Lacan is not concerned with the object of desire. Rather, he focuses on the cause of desire, what he describes as the "*object a*" which is "responsible for the advent of desire, for the particular form the desire in question takes, and for its intensity" (Fink 91). Fink also asserts that the *object a* is the Other's desire and it is this Other's desire, that arouses desire in a child. It is not the Other's desire for "specific objects and people" that causes the child's desire, but "the Other's desire as pure desirousness … that elicits desire in the child" (91). Therefore, it is the Other's desire for desire itself, or to desire, that is the cause of the child's desire. Lacan's reading of *Hamlet* is not as a

tragedy of betrayal but as a tragedy of desire; not Hamlet's desire but the desire of his mother. Parkin-Gounelas interprets the tragedy of Oedipus as Oedipus's "refusal to recognize his desire as expressed in the oracle," that is, his inability to "recognize his desire as the desire of the other" (96).

Undesirable Desire and "Female Aberration"

Efuru is used to represent the Igbo cultural space as dynamic and contested. Nwapa uses Efuru and her late mother to foreground women's self-fashioning. She contests normative definitions of femininity, and repositions agency as both culturally grounded as well as a mode of resistance. Efuru's self-fashioning appears to emanate from a desire that resists acceptable cultural norms. Her desire originates from the absence of a mother, and the desire to wield agency like her mother. In wanting to reorder the structure of things in the culture, Efuru's desire becomes undesirable, because it is regarded as an aberration, a perversion of the cultural codes. Her desire for Adizua, her first husband, is an undesirable desire and it can be said to be revolutionary, not necessarily in marrying him but in attempting to reorder the social norms guiding the rite of marriage.

In Igbo culture, a woman's bride-price has to be paid before she can move into her husband's house. A. R. Nwabude notes that bride-price is symbolic and provides legitimacy, because marriage cannot take place without it. A woman who marries without a bride-price brings shame and dishonour not only to herself but also to her nuclear and extended family. By moving in with Adizua without bride-price, Efuru brings shame to her family. If the lack of bride-price is an aberration, Efuru's manner of fulfilling this cultural obligation is itself revolutionary because within her patriarchal culture, the payment of bride-price is exclusively the obligation of the man in question who wishes to marry. Her second husband, Eneberi, is commended for this. According to Nwashike Ogene, Efuru's father, '"You have done like a man …. Men of these days are not as responsible as we were in our days. They want to marry wives, but they don't sit down and count the cost …"' (135). Unlike her first marriage, where her bride-price is paid after a year and chiefly through her efforts, Eneberi pays Efuru's bride-price in "cash" (135). This shows that it is not in a woman's place to pay for her own bride-price because it is the "yes" of the woman that precedes the payment of bride-price which is the final obligation a man would perform before a woman customarily becomes his wife.

Efuru appears to disrupt hegemonic constructions of deviance and to reposition agency as a transformative strategy. Efuru's desire constitutes her subjecthood, a desire that is excentric, and unstable. This desire appears to have no antecedent, because it is neither modelled on the desire of her mother nor of persons within her community. It is a desire that desires for the sake of desire, as demonstrated by her running away to Adizua's house. According to the narrator, Efuru and Adizua "were going to proclaim themselves married and that was that" (*Efuru* 7). This act of proclaiming themselves married without endorsement by the culture is not only perverse and a deviation from the cultural norm, but also shows the absence of the symbolic order, the absence of "the Law." Or it can be said that Efuru is unable to internalize the law. Her relationship with Adizua does not offer any reward for her family. However, her bride-price offers temporary reward as it "removes shame and

insults" from Efuru and her family. It gives a woman "honour and a sense of community value amongst her peers in her husband's home and his family" (Nwabude).

Gender Power Relations: The Triangular Configurations

Gender power relations refer to how society unevenly distributes authority, resources, and decision-making capabilities between women and men, often favouring men. These socially constructed hierarchies define roles, behaviours and a person's place in the society. Thus, power is at the root of gender relations. In "Understanding Power Dynamics in Gender Relation," Gender. Study posits that power determines who has access to resources, who makes decisions and whose voice is heard. Efuru's desire destabilizes the assigned cultural roles within the social structures and provides the background for the power relations between her and other characters in the novel. The pattern of conflict in Efuru's social exchange relations with other characters is triangular. In the first triangle, it is familial as well as marital and moves in an interactive pattern with Efuru at the base of this structure. The conflict here is between Efuru and her father, and Efuru and Adizua. Unlike the first triangle, the second triangle involves marital, familial and communal relations. This conflict involves Efuru and Eneberi, Efuru and Eneberi's family, and Efuru and Omirima, an outsider, who represents the community. These social exchange relations also suggest the movement of desire.

In the first triangle, the conflict between Efuru and her father centres on her marriage with Adizua, who is conceived as ill-suited for her. Efuru's father does not anticipate positive outcomes from this relationship, because Efuru's "comparison level of alternative" (Nakonezny and Denton 404) is more attractive outside than within the relationship. By intentionally disregarding the most important cultural norm concerning marriage, Efuru establishes the pattern of conflict between her and her father which is resolved the moment her bride-price is paid. However, in paying her bride price, Efuru yet again attempts to rewrite the cultural order concerning marital social relations. In her relationship with Adizua, Efuru assumes that the greater her resources and commitment level, the greater the "marital solidarity" (Nakonezny & Denton 404). Having the greatest resources in the relationship ought to have accorded her marital power over Adizua, but that is not the case because marital power moves in two directions – the partner with greater resources has the power to reward or punish and, on the other hand, the partner with least commitment is least dependent (if at all) on the other partner since the level of attraction is greater elsewhere. Efuru suffers in Adizua's hands because he has invested nothing in the relationship. If he had paid the dowry perhaps it would have increased Efuru's attractiveness. It would have somewhat balanced the reward and cost outcome. But there is no investment on his part so there can be no profit or loss. Thus, he walks out of his marriage because he has the least level of commitment. Nakonezny and Denton state that in a marital social exchange relationship, "the partner with the least commitment has the greatest power" (406). Adizua demonstrates that he has marital power over Efuru by walking out of their marriage thereby inflicting pain on her. On the other hand, Efuru exercises marital power, because she takes back her autonomy by quitting the marriage and marrying Eneberi. She refuses to be a victim like her mother-in-law. Thus, Efuru

demonstrates greater power, because her action leads to independence while Adizua's action reveals his utmost dependency on his partners.

In the second triangle, there is Efuru, Eneberi and his family, and Omirima, a friend of Eneberi's mother, who can be said to represent the community. Efuru's exchange relations in this triangle are marital and communal. Unlike her relationship with Adizua, her relationship with Eneberi is mutual. Initially, they enjoy marital solidarity because their rewards and costs of outcome appeal to both of them. They share equal commitment and mutual dependence. However, if Adizua's weakness is patrilineal, Eneberi's appears to be a problem of choice and poor judgement. It is interference from third parties, particularly from Omirima, that causes the rupture of her relationship with Eneberi. Ironically, it is the social structure that destabilizes her relationship with Eneberi. This structure governs the cultural norms and thus the terms of social exchange relations. Norms, according to E.M. Griffin, "are the stated and implicit rules of a group that identify the range of acceptable behaviour" (204), and social exchange theory describes them as "socially rewarded transformations aimed at curbing the use of raw power" (204). In the same way, Nakonezny and Denton point out that whereas the law functions in economic exchange, the "norms of fairness are the intervening norms in social exchange" (407). Thus Eneberi ought to have applied the norms of fairness in defence of Efuru when she is unjustly accused of adultery since Efuru has first shown this norm of fairness to him when he absents himself from her father's burial. The patriarchal system is implicated in Efuru's travails since a man can never be guilty of adultery under this system. Efuru has to swear by Utuosu, a deity, to prove her innocence whereas Eneberi's bastard son, who is proof of his adultery, is approved and endorsed by the culture. In accusing Efuru of adultery, the culture betrays its notion of making scapegoats of women and undermining their influence in a patriarchal society.

Negotiating Tradition and Personal Desire in a Patriarchal World

In *Efuru*, a man is considered as superior to a woman even in intellectual maturity. He holds a privileged position in this culture since he dominates key areas in the society while women are excluded from key cultural and ritual discourse. However, what gives a woman visibility in this culture is her ability to have sons. This makes her a bona fide and accepted member of the family she is married into. Nwapa can be said to use Efuru to represent how women negotiate tradition and personal desire in a patriarchal world. As already established, the centrality of power in gender relations cannot be overemphasized. The same power can be said to demonstrated in the exercise of desire, because to desire is to exercise agency, since it is one with power that occupies a speaking position.

In Efuru's first marriage, her desire is both undesirable and revolutionary and it brings conflict in her social exchange relations. In her second marriage, Efuru appears to reinvent her desire, to desire like the other, to conform to the customs of her people. Having exercised dominance in her relationship with Adizua, in her second marriage, she adopts partnership because she desires a successful marriage with Eneberi since her first marriage was a failure. Thus, she includes Eneberi in her decisions, and because they invest mutually into their relationship, this increases their marital solidarity.

In her relationship with Adizua, Efuru wields the power of speech. Everything happens as she has said. She does not go to farm with Adizua because she says she is "'not cut out for farm work'" (10). She will trade, and it happens as she says. She will not feast for three months; they will pay her dowry in one year, and even though Adizua's mother argues that her father must be told that she is having her "bath because it would be unfair to do so without his knowledge" (12), Efuru says otherwise and "it was as [she] said" (12). Therefore, in her relationship with Adizua, her father's name and her wealth put her in a speaking position. When Efuru and Adizua go to pay Efuru's bride-price, Efuru demonstrates that she is the one with authority based on her level of preparedness. She gives Adizua money to give her father in place of a bottle of schnapps Adizua is fined for living with a woman without a bride-price. Also, in this culture, a '"male woman'" (*Efuru* 104) is abhorred. She has no support in this culture. Thus, a woman must know her place and leave thinking and reasoning to the man. Yet Efuru finds support in this culture and is honored. Her desire, actions, the status of her family and her wealth allow her to assume this role and perhaps assign this title to her. For instance, Nnona's daughter tells Efuru and in the presence of men: "'Thank you very much.… You have done what only men are capable of doing and so you have done like a man….'" (132). Thus, Efuru has indeed done like a man. It is not because of her physical strength but because of her insight, initiative and enterprise in a culture that attributes wisdom to men and to old age. Efuru's mother has equally enjoyed this privilege in this culture. She was more distinguished than Efuru. She took titles and was about to take the title of "Ogbue-efi" when she died'" (150). It seems that a woman rises above her second-class position when she distinguishes herself. Ironically, the same culture that represses women also gives them the power of speech.

Thus in *Efuru*, lack of a son renders a woman speechless and robs her of her identity. When Omirima seeks to dethrone Efuru from her position, it is because, for Omirima, the power to *speak* belongs to people like her, women with sons. She believes that Efuru's personality and choices and actions are aberrations to womanhood. That Efuru could not have a child/son is an aberration, and that she should be a worshipper of Uhamiri is even more so because it appears to be a rejection of the traditional ideal of motherhood. For in choosing to be a worshipper of Uhamiri, she assumes voluntary childlessness which is an aberration in her culture. None of Uhamiri's worshippers is ever a success as a woman. According to the narrator, none of them has children and those who have children had them before not after becoming worshippers of Uhamiri (162).

Omirima assumes the role of the representative of the culture, and as its corrupt arbitrator, attempts to rid Amede's (Efuru's mother-in-law) household of this aberrant. If Amede, Eneberi's mother, reneges in her role, Omirima sees it as her duty to speak and to champion their culture. Thus, as Elizabeth Grosz opines, "it is not men *per se* who cause women's oppression, but rather the socio-economic and linguistic structure, i.e., the Other" (144). Omirima can be said to stand in the place of the Other who oppresses Efuru. Her action also appears to arise from lack, perhaps the loss of her friend, Amede, to Efuru. Joan Copjec observes that "envy stems precisely from a lack" of the possession of a certain pleasure (160). She notes that whereas "jealousy

fears to lose what it has; envy is pained at seeing another have that which it wants for itself" (160). Omirima therefore seems to be envious of Efuru for that which she wants for herself. Not only does she now lack intimacy with Amede but there is no possibility of redeeming her loss. Consequently, it is the loss of what she once enjoyed that appears to increase her envious hatred for Efuru. She desires to expedite Efuru's failure: as the critic Luce Irigary posits, "'evil eye"' accompanies envy and "its apparent intent to poison or pollute" (160). Moreover, Omirima's position to speak has been displaced or usurped by her daughter in law since she '"… has succeeded in making her husband her child as well"' (Irigary 42) because he no longer listens to his mother (*Efuru* 193). Irigary points out that '"a marriage is not made secure until the wife …'" fulfils the above conditions. Thus, Omirima has lost her son to her daughter-in-law and ultimately her authority and identity. She does not and cannot wield authority in her household since her power has moved into the hands of another who now holds everything.

Contrary to Omirima's scheme, Efuru emerges victorious, proving her capacity to assert her identity as a desiring subject. Also, she asserts her claim as the one with the power to redefine her identity. When Difu counsels her to return to Eneberi, he speaks not so much with the voice of a friend of Efuru but with the voice of the community: "But you are still young and men will continue to seek you. If I were you, I will make up with Eneberi" (220). This is to say that if Efuru continues to remarry, there is no guarantee that any of these men will be better than Adizua or Eneberi so she might as well stick to the one she has. Efuru does not heed this counsel because of her new identity. She chooses to be an unalloyed worshipper of Uhamiri, and unlike in her relationship with Adizua and Eneberi, she finds total fulfilment in her devotion.

Conclusion

This article examines how "female aberration" is constructed and intersects with gender power relations in Igbo culture in Nwapa's *Efuru*. The analysis shows that the idea of aberration, otherness and exclusion are culturally determined. The protagonists's struggles to institute herself as a desiring subject moves her from the position of victim to that of power. The gender power relations in the narrative move in triangular patterns with the protagonist at the base, as constant, since the conflicts revolve around her. Both the marital and familial social exchange relations that Efuru finds herself in stem from her desire to love who and where she pleases and to assert her right to speak. In her two marriages, first to Adizua and later to Eneberi, there are no favourable outcomes or rewards for Efuru. Her reward however comes from elsewhere, from her worship of Uhamiri, the woman of the lake. This relationship with the woman of the lake connects her concretely to the cultures and traditions of her people as the activities of the people – trade, fishing, farming – centre around the local river and the Great River, the domain of Uhamiri. Her resolve to devote her life completely to the worship of Uhamiri proves that she has the power to redefine her identity. Thus, Nwapa seems to contest the notion of female aberrations in Igbo culture and to affirm the idea of agency as self-liberating from the dominance of patriarchal hegemony.

Works Cited

Akwanya, A.N. *Discourse Analysis and Dramatic Literature*. Acena Publishers, 1998.

Anidi, Ojel Clara. "Flora Nwapa's *Efuru* and Toxic Masculinity in Igbo Nigerian Society." *Social Sciences & Humanities Open*, vol.10, 2024, 101055. Science Direct.

Copjec, Joan. *Imagine There's No Woman: Ethics and Sublimation*. Cambridge: MIT P, 2002.

Duruoha, Iheanyichukwu. "The Igbo Novel and Literary Communication of Igbo Culture." *African Study Monographs*, vol.12, no. 4, 1991, pp. 185-200.

Thompson, Sherry. "Deviance and Gender." *EBSCO*. 2021. www.ebsco.com/research-starters/women-s-studies-and-feminism/deviance-and-gender

European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). "Gender Power Relations." eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/about Accessed 13 April 2026

Fink, Bruce. *The Lacanian Subject: Between Language and Jouissance*. Princeton UP, 1995.

Gender. Study. "Issues of Gender and Development: Understanding Power Dynamics in Gender Relations." 31 Aug. 2025, gender.study/issues-of-gender-and-development/power-dynamics-gender-relations/#google_vignette

Griffin, E.M. *A First Look at Communication Theory*. *afirstlook.com*. McGraw-Hill, 25 Nov. 2016.

Grosz, Elizabeth. *Jacques Lacan: A Feminist Introduction*. Routledge, 1990.

Irigary, Luce. *This Sex Which is Not One*. Translated by Catherine Porter and Carolyn Burke, Cornell UP, 1985.

Jell-Bahlsen, Sabine. "The Concept of Mammywater in Flora Nwapa's Novels." *Research in African Literatures*, vol. 26, no. 2, 1995, pp. 30-41.

Koester, Diana. "Gender and Power." *Developmental Leadership Program (DLP)*. May 2015. //prevention-collaboration.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/DLP_2015

Mears, Mary D. "Choice and Discovery: An Analysis of Women and Culture is Flora Nwapa's Fictions." Diss. U of South Florida, 2009.

Miller, Shari Parsons. "Social Exchange Theory." *EBSCO*, 2024. www.ebsco.com/research

-starters/social-sciences-and-humanities/social-exchange-theory

Musa, Idriss Garba, and Stephen Ayok Sharon. "Cultural Intersectionality in Flora Nwapa's *Efuru*." *British Journal of Interdisciplinary Research*, vol. 2, no. 5, 2025, pp. 1-12.

Nakonezny, Paul, and Wayne Denton. "Marital Relationships: A Social Exchange Theory Perspective." *The American Journal of Family Therapy*, vol. 36, 2008, pp. 402-412.

Nwabude, Aaron A.R. "Traditional African (the Igbo) Marriage Customs & the Influence of the Western Culture: Marxist Approach." *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, vol. 10, no. 2, 2022, www.scirp.org/jornal/paperinformation?paperid=115398

Nwapa, Flora. *Efuru*. Heinemann, 1966.

Ógúnfolábí, Káyòdé O. "Re-writing Motherhood in Flora Nwapa's *Efuru*." *UMMA*, vol. 8, 2021, pp. 1-18, journals.udsm.ac.tz/index.php/umma/article/view/4891/4224

Parkin-Gounelas, Ruth. *Literature and Psychoanalysis: Intertextual Readings*. Palgrave-St. Martin's, 2001.

Sheridan, Alan, translator. *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis: Seminar XI*. By Jacques Lacan. Norton, 1998, pp. 277-82.