

Motherhood and the meaning of life: a study of the video films “Cold Hearts” and “Mothering Sunday” (Uka Nne)

Emily Oghale God's Presence*

ABSTRACT: *Motherhood is the state of being a mother; thus, a mother is the person through whom life is brought forth. Ironically, motherhood has become a burden to women. She has often been stereotyped as "victim," "temptress," "evil incarnate," "earth mother" and an "outsider." This kind of representation in films denies woman her true sense of being. This work is therefore set to project film/home video as an inquiry into the meaning of life by focusing on the place and role of mothers in society as well as the challenges of motherhood. Thus, this work will examine Cold Hearts and Mothering Sunday (Uka Nne) as examples of Hollywood video films that have associated motherhood with suffering, self-sacrifice, disparagement, marginalization, and producing and raising babies. It would also proffer recommendations on how video films can be used to give meaning to motherhood.*

Introduction

Motherhood, as often portrayed in films is that of a mother-hen who has to bend her back and shoulders most of the time to give care and protection to her family. Society believes it is the inexorable and inescapable responsibility of mothers to cater for their young ones. Conversely, a motherless society is one that has lost the essential taste of true motherhood through its continued neglect and subversion and substitution of real motherhood roles with stereotypes. Suffice it to state that motherhood is the ineluctable essence of living, hence mothers give meaning to the lives of their children by providing them with motherly care and the basic necessities of life. It is in this light that Ann Taylor, in her poem titled “My Mother,” eulogizes:

*Who sat and watched my infant head
When sleeping on my cradle bed.
And tears of sweet affection shed? My Mother (1).*

A mother gives care to her children therefore, it is expedient that her life be given a meaning by making her live comfortably and happily. Ironically, motherhood in films has been associated with suffering and rejection. That is why, in some video films, mothers die out of regret and sorrow due to neglect by their children. This kind of deliberate “mis-representation” in films downplays the strength and

potentials of women. These women are derogatorily referred to as witches, dirty-hags or the weaker sex. This negative manner of representing women's potentials is summed up by Wole Soyinka in *The Lion and the Jewel* through Sidi, a very assertive character, when she asks Lakunle:

*The weaker sex, is it:
Is it the weaker breed that pounds the yam
Or bends all day to plant millet with a child
strapped to her back? (4).*

Although it is the “weaker sex,” the marginalized, the witch and sex object that breed children and suffer shame in order to give meaning to the lives of her children yet, that inherent gift of mothering and motherhood is possessed by them alone. Therefore, motherhood should be revered with a conscious effort. The disparaging image of women which has been projected in films is a reflection of the marginalization and suffering women are subjected to in our society by oppressive patriarchal ideologies. Consequently, women seem to be losing touch with the meaning of life. They no longer see any purpose for living. They simply have found solace in childbearing alone.

This dilemma is identified by Laura Schlessinger:

Tragically, when a woman doesn't dare to dream or endeavour to a purpose, a sense of meaning generally comes from excessive emphasis on a relationship with a man and/or producing babies sometimes even using the latter to ensure the former (13).

Schlessinger's observation shows that many women hide behind the mask of motherhood (getting married and making babies) as their sole source of making meaning out of life yet, motherhood has not benefited some of them who end up suffering neglect by those same children for whose sake they have denied themselves of life's benefit.

Aims and Objectives

This work is an expository piece aimed at establishing the importance of motherhood, the primary source through which life is given a meaning. This work will thus highlight the role and challenges of motherhood in giving meaning to life.

It is also to entreat filmmakers to create captivating and rewarding roles for women to help them live meaningful lives.

It is also for filmmakers to project women positively in their films to create a good image and prestige of women.

Definition of Basic Concepts

Motherhood: Motherhood is the state of being a mother. According to Dale Hanson Bourke, “Motherhood is not an achievement, it is a calling though many of us were probably answering a different call when we became pregnant. The point is that by the time a woman trades sweet dreams for dirty diapers and frantic lullabies, she knows this is not what she signed up for.” Bourke further observes that “Motherhood is messier, more frustrating, less personally fulfilling than imagined. At moments you look for a way out” (1). The accruing responsibilities of motherhood have made Ann Crittenden to observe that “Motherhood is the single biggest risk of factor for poverty in old age” (qtd in Lopez 3).

Film/Video Film: “Film is a form of discourse, a textual system which implicates the subject in the activity of telling, viewing, and listening. The result of that activity is an object: What is told, viewed and listened to. e.g. character, events and themes” (Shaka, “Modernity” H2). Jowett and Linton see film as a process of communication and a medium that occupies a central role in mass-mediated culture.

Also, Haynes and Okome note that video films are basically “dramatic features shot on video and marketed on cassettes and sometimes also exhibited publicly with video projectors or television monitors” (qtd in Ayakoroma 5). Adesoke observes that the “home video” medium came into existence in the early 1990s and since then it has been a major tool in preserving and propagating the cultural values of the Nigerian society (47).

The Role of Mothers and the Challenges of Motherhood

It is imperative to note that the first obligation of a mother is to cater for her young ones so as to give meaning to their lives. This assertion is complemented by Elleke Boehmer when she writes:

She is there at the beginning of the lives of individuals and of nations.

In various nationalist mythologies and, more recently, in the matriarchal yearnings of dispossessed women seeking their own place in nations and in history, mother figures cradle their children in comforting and capacious laps (3).

Elleke Boehmer's observation of woman as “Mother of the Nation” shows that the woman is “the bearer of continuity” or bearer of

life (from the cradle). She does not enjoy the benefits, the privileges and rights that derive from that nation. Rather, as a mother, she faces challenges as she tries to carve out a place or an identity for herself in society. In this light, motherhood has become a major concern to women, especially feminists because it is only a woman (either as a mother or daughter) who can properly tell and project her own story and experiences. Therefore, Nasta opines that it is an important fact that the role of mother, with all that it implies, is universally imposed upon women as their main identity, their “proper” identity, above all others (xx).

Despite the fact that mothers are seen as bearers of continuity, better administrators, care givers, e.t.c., they are often stigmatized as witches, prostitutes, the-spoken-for (voiceless), and self-sacrificers whose lives are laid down for the benefit of others. In spite of the recent rise of women to leadership positions in politics, managerial and administrative sectors, much attention has not been paid to her welfare to give meaning to her life. Thus, she is daily confronted with the onerous task of unravelling the puzzles that pose a challenge to her as she tries to keep the home front, and at the same time measure up to her male counterparts. The challenges of motherhood are numerous and tasking especially, that of child rearing. A typical phenomenon is succinctly engrafted into a song titled “Sweet Mother”:

*Sweet Mother, I no go forget you, for the suffer wey you suffer
for me oh,
If I no sleep, my mother no go sleep,
If I no chop, my mother no go chop,
'She no dey tire oh,
Sweet mother oh, sweet mother oh oh.*

This West African highlife sung by the Nigerian/Cameroonian singer Prince Nico Mbarga and his Rocafil Jazz band was released in Nigeria, in December 1976. This song, which was sung in Nigerian Pidgin English “is a celebration of motherhood” (Wikipedia 1). How ironic this assumption has become because motherhood is often characterized with suffering instead of being celebrated.

Kathryn Lopez, in her review of Ann Crittenden's book titled *The Price of Motherhood: Why the Most Important Job in the World is the Least Valued*, notes that although Crittenden is a feminist, she is confronted with the responsibility of presenting motherhood as being important and enjoyable. Lopez observes that Crittenden resigned her job as a New York Times reporter to take care of her son saying:

I imagined that domestic drudgery was going to be swept into the dustbin of history as men and women linked arms and marched off to run the world in a new egalitarian alliance. It never occurred to me that women might be at home because there were children there; that housewives might become extinct, but mothers and fathers never would (1)

This observation aligns with Helen Chukwuma's kind of African feminism which is accommodationist. She advocates that men and women work co-operatively perhaps, this will add value and meaning to women's lives. She therefore suggests that "there is need for women to take their rightful places in society beside and alongside their men, not behind them groaning in silence" (xi). Despite the roles and challenges of mothers in giving meaning to the lives of their children which may culminate in their taking a maternity leave or even resigning from their jobs, yet much importance is not given to their sacrifices. Regrettably though, Crittenden's observations that "raising children maybe the most important job in the world, but you can't put it on a resume" (qtd in Lopez 1) is a pointer to the claim that motherhood is characterized with suffering and sacrifices that are hardly noticed and appreciated. Little wonder that Honore de Balzac affirms that "maternal love makes of every woman a slave" (qtd in Lopez 3).

Although nature has made the woman the channel through which life evolves yet, she goes the extra mile of self-denial to give meaning to those lives she has brought forth. Little wonder that Mrs. Wang, a Taiwanese employer and mother of three children, resigned her job as a financial consultant and a computer engineer in a major company in Taiwan to become a full-time mother. According to a research carried out on the topic "Reframing the Globalization of Domestic Service," Ada Cheng observes that Mrs. Wang hired a foreign domestic to assist her:

In addition to being a full-time mother and wife, she has also become a household manager, delegating domestic responsibilities and supervising the work of a foreign domestic. While she used to be a professional in the public sphere, she now sees herself as a professional within the private sphere. Mrs. Wang is not alone in the conception of her role as a household manager (2).

Analysis

Motherhood and the Meaning of Life in "Cold Hearts" and "Mothering Sunday."

Every viewer who watches films objectively often searches for a meaning purpose for projecting such an idea so he or she can be entertained and educated. Sadly enough, most filmmakers, especially in the Nigerian video film industry, contrive roles that represent the repressive culture of a patriarchal society where the woman's life is sacrificed for the success of her husband and children thereby making her life devoid of meaning. Thus, in the films *"Cold Hearts"* and *"Mothering Sunday"* Agnes (Shobowale Shola) and Nnenwa (Chinwe Owo) respectively, suffered due to no fault of their own. Agnes, who bears three sons: Jude (Emeka Ike), Mike (Desmond Elliot) and Kenneth (Mike Manafa), and a daughter, Nonye (Bimbo Oshin), suffers neglect and rejection and dies of ill health due to lack of financial assistance from her three sons who blame their father's death on her nagging attitude. Her nagging results from her husband's drinking habit which culminates in his squandering and gambling away the N5,000.00 loan she borrows from the Market Women's Association to help restore his financial status. In anger, she drives him out into the cold night where he is killed by ritual murderers.

Conversely, Nnenwa, in *"Mothering Sunday,"* whose first husband, Onyebuchi, dies and her son, Ernest (Emeka, Okafor) is confiscated by her mother-in-law, (Rosemary Azinge) who accuses her (Nnenwa) of killing her own husband, makes her return to her home land (Ibo land) where she settles for another marriage and bears another son, Ejike (Bob Manuel Udokwu) whose father later dies.

The two mothers in these films denied themselves the pleasures of life, to the extent that one had to die on the long run, all in the bid to making meaning out of the lives of their children who later disregard the care and sufferings of their mothers. These two women, who suddenly become widows, struggle to raise their children without caring about their own lives. Nnenwa, whose husband dies of poisoned food, goes as far as selling her few fairly used wrappers and gets only five hundred naira (N500.00) which she uses to pay Ejike's school fees. She goes as far as stealing cassava from a farm. She is later seen selling a stolen chicken in the village market. For stealing a chicken, she is publicly disgraced as she is decorated with fresh palm leaves while holding the stolen chicken, the crowd boos her as she is taken round the village. Consequently, the village women declare her an outcast. This picture presents motherhood as a burden to women; a life devoid of happiness and meaning and agrees with Ama Ata Aidoo's painful observation that:

But there is no doubt that, ever since, the image of the African woman in the mind of the world has been set: she is breeding

too many children she cannot take care of and for whom she should not expect other people to pick up the tab. She is hungry, and so are her children. Infact, it has become a cliché of Western Photojournalism that the African woman is old beyond her years. She is half-naked; her drooped and withered breasts are well exposed; there are flies buzzing around the faces of her children; and she has a permanent begging bowl in her hand (39).

There is nothing wrong in bearing many children, but problems could arise when the parents, especially the mothers are financially incapacitated and can no longer cater for their children. Due to the patriarchal nature of the African culture, men are privileged to have good jobs while majority of the women, especially the uneducated engage in petty trades, farming, and odd jobs to help support their men. It could be catastrophic when a husband loses his so-called “white collar job” to now depend on the meager earnings of his wife from sale of farm produce and other articles. Some mothers rely on their children and family members for support. This is the major challenge of the African woman as represented by Agnes and Nnenwa. Suffice it to state that the major challenge of the African woman is financial incapacitation because despite the fact that Nnenwa had only two children and Agnes four, their sufferings were predicated upon their children's negligence, as shown in these two video films. For example, Nnenwa, in *Mothering Sunday*, who suffers from stroke after her husband's death receives no help from her second son, Ejike. Consequently, Ejike travels all the way from Lagos to give his mother only N200.00 to take care of her ill health stating that she is only suffering from malaria and that money should not be wasted. Ejike finally arrives home with a truck load of goats, foodstuff, etc to bury his supposed “dead mother ” through a deceptive letter from his mother's relatives declaring her dead. On arrival, he discovers that Ernest, the first son from the first marriage has come to take their mother to Abuja where she regains her health.

On the other, Agnes, in “*Cold Hearts,* ” who has four children and whose health also fails after her husband's death, suffers rejection from her children and finally dies. Her children's claim that she is responsible for their father's death as a result of her incessant naggings makes them to neglect her while they live cozy lives, travel abroad and execute contracts that run into millions of naira. According to them, it was her “nagging” that drives their father into the cold night and he is thus killed. Unlike Nnenwa who recovers from her ill health, Agnes dies out of pain, neglect and sorrow. Her death causes so much pain to her only daughter, Nonye who tries her best to save their mother but

was also financially incapacitated - (It is still the femalefolk that is saddled with the responsibility of care and the problem of financial setback).

These films, "*ColdHearts*" and "*MotheringSunday*," try to inquire into the meaning of the life of mothers (motherhood) - if their sacrifices are met with positive rewards since most of them end up dying without enjoying the fruits of their labour. Agnes suffers neglect as a result of her sons' unforgiveness which earns her the name "nagger," while Nnewa is termed "local" and "old" by Ejike.

The inquiry into the meaning of life through video films is very apt at this turn of the century when globalization exposes the pains of motherhood in different cultures of the world. Typical of the African culture, women do not have rights and so Nnewa suffers after the death of her husband because her in-laws confiscate her husband's property and leave her with nothing with which to raise Ejike. Most African women lose their husbands due to circumstances beyond their control, and they lay down their lives to raise their children who may or may not regard their selfless sacrifices in the future.

It is pertinent to note that feminist film critics often decry the negative manner women are represented in films which does not help improve their status and self worth. This is because the ideologies of patriarchy which have been projected in Literature are being adopted in films. Mayne has projected an alternative representation - the "woman's film," or "women's cinema" - where women can tell their own stories and produce their own films. She writes that "first, women's cinema refers to films made by women, and by women directors for the most part (as opposed, say to screenwriters or actresses)" (2).

Contributions of Feminist Film Critics

Feminist film discourses have often challenged the negative profiling of women in films and have thus championed the course for positive representation. Therefore, the alternative representation which can be achieved through the women's cinema is paramount and a formidable source of inquiry into the meaning of a woman's life. Suffice it to say that motherhood, as represented in films, is encumbered with negativity that epitomizes suffering. Perhaps Vivian Gomick's essay entitled "Woman As Outsider" explicitly exemplifies the attendant problems and the predicament of mothers and motherhood when she writes.

The life of woman, like the life of every outsider, is determinedly symbolic of the life of the race; that this life is offered up, as every other outsider's life is offered up, as a sacrifice to the forces of annihilation that surround our sense of existence, in

the hope that in reducing the strength of the outsider in declaring her the bearer of all the insufficiency and contradiction of the race the wilderness, grief, and terror of loss that is in us will be grafted onto her, and the strength of those remaining in the circle will be increased. For in the end, that is what the outsider is all about; that is what power and powerlessness are all about; that is what the cultural decision that certain people are "different " is all about: if only these Steppenwolfs, these blacks, these women will go mad and die for us, we will escape; we will be saved; we will have made a successful bid for salvation (qtd in Penley 207).

The meaninglessness of life for the woman, as portrayed through the maginalization, suffering, denial and stereotypes of evil incarnate, sex objects, witches, or objects of male gaze, has been the manipulation and creation of filmmakers who are mostly males. This places man inside history while the woman's role is "ahistoric and eternal" (Johnston 209). This means that women's roles in movies do not change since "within a sexist ideology and a male-dominated cinema, woman is presented as what she represents for man" (Johnston 211). The meaninglessness of motherhood, as portrayed in films and videos is further stated by Laura Mulvey:

Woman then stands in patriarchal culture as a signifier for the male other, bound by a symbolic order in which man can live out his phantasies and obsessions through linguistic command by imposing them on the silent image of woman still tied to her places as bearer of meaning, not maker of meaning (305).

From the video films examined in this study, it is obvious that the filmmakers have not ascribed significance to the lives of mothers who go the extra mile to cater for their children and sometimes play the role of the "bread winner." According to Mulvey, women's portrayal is set either to devalue, punish or save woman, the "guilty object" or to make her a pedestal figure, a fetish ..." (qtd in Nichols, 1985, p. 304). Similarly, Shaka has also decried the "time-worn patriarchal practice of laying the blame for the downfall of the male gender at the doorstep of the female gender" (Shaka, "History" 24). The representation of women as bearers of meaning and not makers of meaning is a product of the manipulation of filmmakers; therefore it is pertinent at this juncture that attention be paid to Bill Nichol's charge:

feminist film practice must challenge the dominant film practice, whose means of signification are keyed to a patriarchal ideology that reconstitutes sexuality in hierarchical or oppositional terms: "it is this imaginary unit, the sutured coherence (that centres on the phallus as paradigm of male sexuality, marking the female as "object rather than subject of desire"), the imaginary sense of identity set up by the classic film which must be challenged by a feminist film practice (315).

Summary and Conclusion

The question asked by Ebele Eko and Imoh Emenyi is very essential to this work: what is it that the directors of these films want to achieve through the characterization of their heroines? Could it be a feminist revolution? Whether their intention is an extension of patriarchal domination and women subjugation or a quest for the meaning of life, these two films "*Cold Hearts*" and "*Mothering Sunday*" with the aid of camera angles and shots, have not projected motherhood in a positive light.

The role of the media, especially video films, as an inquiry into the meaning of life is very important to any individual or phenomenon, especially to motherhood thus, "a strategic use of the media, and film in particular, is essential for disseminating our ideas" (Johnston 213). It is pertinent to note that the video films examined in this study have revealed that the life of the woman, as a mother, has no meaning. It is full of pain, sacrifice, subjugation, and other negative stereotypes. The image she is herein represented goes a long way in making other women view motherhood with trepidation because of the powerful influence of the media. Martin Joly, in his work "Believing (in) the image?" succinctly exposes the lasting impression of what is viewed when he opines that "but the memory of an image will also be the more forcible the more visual message has been repeated: ..." (48). Therefore, meaning, in the positive sense, that will glorify and honour motherhood should be added to films by female filmmakers who must rise up to challenge the manipulations of male filmmakers. At this juncture, Hans Magnus Enzenberger's advice is important:

The question is therefore not whether the media are manipulated, but who manipulates them. The revolutionary plan should not require the manipulators to disappear; on the contrary, it must make everyone a manipulator (qtd. in Johnston 213).

In order for this age-long (mis)representation of "woman as victim, temptress, evil incarnate, and earth mother" (Penley 206), and

“sacrifice through death” (Kay 186-187) to be corrected, then the “women's cinema” or “woman's film” (Mayne 2) must be explored for women to produce their own films and project their image and tell their stories appropriately. Conversely, the rights of women, as humans, should not be denied them. Equal rights to a good life, good education job, basic amenities should be given to them. There are numerous women's groups and organizations, both nationally and internationally formed to help add meaning to women's lives especially to motherhood. Unfortunately, a lot more is yet to be achieved. Thus:

It is dehumanizing that the Universality of Women's Subordination together with its longevity, is no longer contestable. It is as old as history. Within many societies, the discrimination is glaring, in others, such as the more technologically advanced nations, it is subtle. It is, for instance, in recognition of the global nature of the disadvantages which women suffer that the United Nations set aside the of March every year as “Women's Day”. The year 1975 was also recognized as the “International Women's Year, ” while the years, 1976-1985 were assigned as a decade to women ” (Chukukere 195).

Recommendations

For motherhood to be devoid of stigma, reproach, self-sacrifice and meaninglessness, films/video films should be used effectively in the following manner as an inquiry into the meaning of life.

More women filmmakers (Screen writers, producers and Directors) should be trained and encouraged.

Films that project the rights of women - (right to ownership of property after a husband's death, etc) - should be produced.

Films that project motherhood as a prestigious and honourable status should be produced to help raise women's self-esteem.

Films that project widowers should be produced for the malefolk to also experience what it would look like if their wives died leaving them with the responsibility of child rearing.

More women should be educated and their financial status raised. Films that place women at advantageous positions will make women know how to handle eventualities.

Women should not be denied their rights. Feminism which is “a striving for gender equity” should be enforced, especially in the family.

WORKS CITED

- Adeseke, Adefolaju Eben. "Society, Culture and Morality: A Critical Analysis of Gender Profiling in Nigerian Home Video." Thesis. U of Ibadan, 2002. Print.
- Aidoo, Ama Ata. "The African Woman Today." *Sisterhood, Feminisms and Power: From Africa to the Diaspora*. Ed. Obioma Nnaemeka. Trenton: African World, 1998.39-50. Print.
- Ayakoroma, Barclays F. "Trends in Contemporary Nigerian Video Film Industry: A Study of Selected Emergent Genres." Ph.D. Sem. U of Port Harcourt, 2007.
- Boehmer, Elleke. "Stories of Women and Mothers: Gender and Nationalism in the Early Fiction of Flora Nwapa." *Motherlands: Black Women's Writing from Africa, the Caribbean and South Asia*. Ed. Susheila Nasta. London: The Women's, 1991.3-23. Print.
- Bourke, Dale Hanson. "Of Leadership and Motherhood." FaithInTheWorkPlace.com. Christianity Today. Int., 2011. Web. 13 Apr. 2011.
- Cheng, A. "Reframing Work and Identity: Changing Meanings of Domesticity, Womanhood, and Motherhood in Globalization." Project. U of Chicago, 2003. Web. 27 Oct. 2010.
- Chukukere, Gloria. "Images of Women in Contemporary Fiction." *Introductory Readings in the Humanities and Social Sciences*. Ed. Gloria Chukukere. Onitsha: UPC, 1988. 1-26. Print.
- Chukwuma, Helen, ed. *Feminism in African Literature: Essays on Criticism*. Enugu: New Generation, 1994. Print.
- Eko, Ebele, and Imoh A. Emenyi. "Female Portraiture in Nigerian Films: An Analysis of "Dark Goddess and True Confession. " *Ndunode: Calabar Journal of Humanities* 3.2 (2002): 170-179. Print.
- Johnston, Claire. "Women's Cinema as Counter-Cinema." *Movies and Methods*, vol. 1. Ed. Bill Nichols. Berkeley: UCP, 1976.208-217. Print.
- Joly, Martine. "Believing (in) the Image?" *Towards the Theory of the Image*. Ed. Jon. Thompson. Maastricht: Jen Van Eych Akademie, 1996. 44-61. Print.
- Jowett, G and J. M Linton. *Movies as mass communication*. 2nd ed. California: Sage, 1989. Print.
- Kay, Karyn. "Sister of the Night." *Movies and methods*, vol.1. Ed. Bill Nichols. Berkeley: UCP, 1976. 185-194. Print.
- Lopez, Karyn. "Ms. Discovers Motherhood: Ann Crittenden on mothers and choices." *National Review*, 9-10 June. 2001. Web. 27 Oct. 2010.

- Mayne, Judith. *The Woman at the keyhole: Feminism and Women's Cinema*. Indianapolis: Indiana UP, 1990. Print.
- Mulvey, Laura. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." *Movies and Methods*, vol. 2. Ed. Bill Nichols. Berkeley: UCP, 1985. 303-315. Print.
- Nasta, Susheila. ed. *Motherlands: Black Women's Writing from Africa, the Caribbean and South Asia*. London: The Women's Press Ltd, 1991. Print.
- Nichols, Bill, ed. *Movies and Methods*, vol. 2. Berkeley: UCP, 1985. Print.
- Penley, Constance. "Cries and Whispers." *Movies and Methods*, vol.1. Ed. Bill Nichols. Berkeley: UCP, 1976.204-208. Print.
- Schlessinger, Laura. *Ten Stupid Things Women Do to Mess up their Lives*. Benin City: Gospel, 2003. Print.
- Shaka, Femi. "History, Genres and Texts of the Emergent Video Film Industry in Nigeria." *Kiabara: Journal of Humanities?*, 1 (2002): 11-30. Print.
- Okiremuete. *Modernity and the African Cinema: A Study in Colonialist Discourse, Postcoloniality, and Modern African Identities*. Trenton: African World, 2004. Print.
- Soyinka, Wole. *The Lion and the Jewel*. London: Oxford UP, 1963. Print.
- "Sweet Mother." *Wikipedia*, 26Mar. 2011. Web. 13Apr.2011.
- Taylor, Ann. "My Mother." *PoemHunter.Com*. N.p., n.d. Web. 13 Apr. 2011.

Filmography

- Cold Hearts*. Dir. Ifeanyi Ikpoenyi. Perf. Shola Shobowale, Don August, Emeka Ike, Desmond Elliot, and Bimbo Oshin. A Rock Production, 2003. VCD.
- Mothering Sunday (Uka Nne)*. Dir. Chika Onu. Perf. Chinwe Owo, Bob- Manuel Udokwu, Zack Orji, and Rita Nzelu. A Valesco Industries Ltd. Production, 2001. VCD.