

UYO BOOK CLUB

READERS ARE LEADERS



The Brook

Vol. 1 Nos. 2

July - Sept. 2021

UYO BOOK CLUB



NEWSLETTER



On May 9, 2021, another Book Club, the Raffia City Book Club (RCBC) was set up in the city of Ikot Ekpene, Akwa Ibom State. The city becomes the second in the state where the founder of Book Clubs in Akwa Ibom, Dr Udemé Nana, has set up station to bring back the culture of reading and social learning.

Contd on P.3

News Flash

Uyo Book Club will in September 2021, host the first ever National Book Clubs Conference in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. Expected as special appearances include Wole Soyinka, Chimamanda Adichie, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, Ray Ekpu and others. A sneak peek into activities lined out include: book sessions, tours to historical sites, book village experience, spoken word poetry, exhibitions, 'mbuknyin' and a sumptuous variety night.

About Us

Uyo Book Club

- Guiding Philosophy

Uyo Book Club is an intellectual hub. A community of lovers of education; reading, writing and discourse.

The main focus of the UyoBook Club (UBC) is to re-awaken the reading culture among people at all levels in the society. We believe that through reading, the sensibilities of people can be refined as a foundation for a society.

The Club promotes the establishment of Book Clubs in all parts of Akwa Ibom State. It strives to create enthusiasm among people for BOOKS and READING in addition to endowment of Reading/Writing Awards and Prizes at all levels. The Club promotes writing, review of books, collection, distribution and preservation of Books for use by interested persons.

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From the Editorial Desk



The maiden edition of **The Brook** proved that any vision is realizable if only there are focused souls.

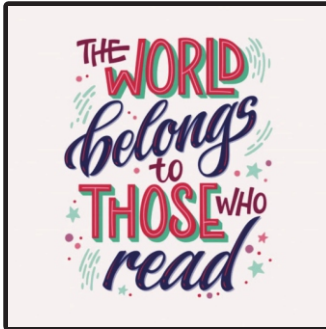
Just as the name, 'The Brook' is determined to serve as an intellectual spring where people gather to get filled. A sort of Readers' Companion!

The beautiful spread with high-taste contents is more than a savouring menu of a world-class restaurant. From the Editor's page, Book Gallery, Personality Profile, Inspirational, Crossword Puzzle, Quotable Quotes, News, Poetry and the Spotlight, are unassumingly enticing to trap a mind and keep it there for nourishment.

The second edition of **The Brook** is out to serve your intellectual longings, not less. Its outing will get better and serve as a handy intellectual pamphlet.

Its reach is limitless; to schools, offices, homes and just about anywhere. We hope it finds a good place everywhere. That's our aim!

This edition plays a follow up to the educational crossword puzzle where a winner emerged. Also, it showcases notable Book happenings within the period. Uyo, an



emerging Book City, sprouting Book Clubs, Libraries, are just tip of the ice-berg.

We stay on focus to nurture a community of Book lovers with healthy reading, writing, and presentation skills to the extent of refining sensibilities.

The Brook is here again! Get your copy.



Enwono-Abasi Elisha

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Things Fall Apart is 63 years old this month (June). The classic novel written in June 1958 by Late Prof Chinua Achebe is viewed as the archetypal modern African novel in English, and one of the first to receive global critical acclaim. The writer was 28 years old when he wrote the book.

In the epic novel, *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe's portrayal of the Ikemefuna saga remains a telling lesson about the African leadership fault line - the fear of being thought weak. Okonkwo refuses to listen to warnings from his close friend, Obierika, and falsely celebrates the Oracle of Hills and Caves. He cuts down Ikemefuna to show superman mentality, and offends the deeper elements. Returning from exile in Mbanta, he could not read the currents properly in a changing Umuofia. Mkpoama change! Okonkwo is later caught in a murder web, while fighting what he sees as the white man's intrusions. To his shock, no body joins him. Feeling betrayed, he hangs himself. Could it be a case of what I call 'to fall while standing?' The fear of being thought weak is at the heart of leadership tragedies.

Ekong Sampson, Ph.D

"I kept always two books in my pocket, one to read, one to write in."
-Robert Louis Stevenson

"You don't have to burn books to destroy a culture. Just get a people to stop reading them."
- Ray Bradbury



"Think before you speak. Read before you think."

- Fran Lebowitz

RAFFIA CITY BOOK CLUB INAUGURATED IN IKOT EKPENE

Contd. from P. 1

In his opening remarks, the Convener of RCBC, Dr. Udeme Nana, welcomed guests and commended Abom Tony Esu for providing the library / arts facilities for the Book Club. Nana, who spoke on the benefits of reading, emphasized that reading refines the sensibilities of people and that a people whose sensibilities are thoroughly refined make for a better society. He urged the people of Ikot Ekpene to help drive the vision.

The newly installed Patron of the Club, Abom Tony Esu, expressed hope that the Raffia City

Book Club would come to stay. High point of the event was the investiture of the connoisseur of Arts in the area, Abom Tony Esu, as the Patron of Raffia City Book Club.

Also, it would be recalled that Uyo Book Club had recently inaugurated a Book Club at the Nigerian Christian Institute (NCI), Uyo, to commemorate 2021 World Book Day.

By Hanson Uko

WATBRIDGE OPENS GUEST LIBRARY

Watbridge Hotels & Suites scores another historic feat as it unveils first ever Guest Library named after the great African writer, Ngugi wa Thiong'o.

The Library is a state-of-the-art facility comprising a reading area, cyber cafe, tea bay as well as e-library and hard copy components to boost the reading culture, encourage scholastic research and inventive imagination for lodgers and visitors to the hotel.

The inauguration of the edifice was performed by the Special Guest of Honour and the Executive Director of the International Press Institute (IPI), Lanre Arogundade.

Arogundade, described the library as an ingenious addition and one of the most novel in the entire world.

Addressing the gathering, Chairman of the hotel, Elder U. S. Akpan, described the library as a product of a vision that seeks to promote literacy in the society. Also Speaking, an Advisor to the hotel, Barr. Ekong Sampson said that the facility is an innovation that seeks to promote reading culture in the society.

In his remarks, the founder of the Uyo Book Club, Dr Udeme Nana, described the Hotel as a holistic hospitality facility in the state with the addition of the Guest Library.

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, a Kenyan and academic, who writes primarily in Gikuyu is an important figure in African Literature. His works include novels, plays, short stories and essays, ranging from literary and social criticism to children's literature. Weep Not Child is one of his most famous books.

By Samuel Udoma

UBC LAUNCHES NEWSLETTER



Recently, the Uyo Book Club unveiled her Newsletter, 'The Brook' promising to distribute it to embassies and to propose it for use as an in-flight-Journal in IbomAir.

Launched at Watbridge Hotels in Uyo, during its April reading session, the club, through its

founder, Dr Udeme Nana, said the publication will also spread to schools, State Ministries/Agencies and other relevant publics.

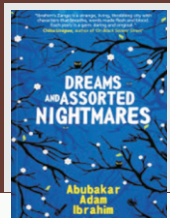
Unveiling the publication, the Executive Chairman of Uyo Local Government Area, Dr Uwemedimo Udo, thanked the founder of the club, Dr Nana for driving the vision and sustaining same. He promised to support the club when she will be playing host to the first ever National Conference of Book Clubs in Nigeria in September, 2021.

In his remarks, the Vice Chancellor of University of Uyo, Prof. Nyaudoh Ndaeyo, described the club as a deviation from the norm, noting that with its tenets which harp on intellectual upgrade and sensibility refinement, there will be need for its spread across schools in the state.

By Enwono-Abasi Elisha

DREAMS AND ASSORTED NIGHTMARES

by Abubakar A. Ibrahim



Abubakar Adam Ibrahim's *Dreams and Assorted Nightmares* is a collection of interconnected short stories set in Zango, Nigeria. Works by other African writers that employ a similar interconnection of characters and plot across parts of a book or short stories include E.C. Osundu's *This House is Not for Sale*, Yaa Gyasi's *Homegoing* and Helon Habila's *Waiting for an Angel*. In *Dreams and Assorted Nightmares*, the stories tumble into one another and reveal the lives of various characters as they progress.

This collection of 12 stories is not for the empath or those who are deeply in touch with their emotions. Simply put, the stories can be very triggering. *Dreams and Assorted Nightmares* is brutally honest. We find the themes of shameless infidelity, polygamy, violence against sex workers, the stigmatization of people with special needs or those living with disabilities, religious fanaticism, belief in the supernatural and its influence on the natural, betrayal and, most predominantly, death. Ibrahim does not aim to please the senses; death is as sorrowful as death comes. Human life is portrayed with all of its loss, and feelings, both platonic and sensual, ambition and sacrifice, and this, in my opinion, is where the beauty of this work lies.

In the first story in this collection, we follow the story of Laminde who, at some point in her marriage, has to share her husband with a second wife. It is from her that we find out about the history of Zango as a wayfarer's town and the mysteries that rule the night. From Laminde's eyes and the memories in her head, we meet Vera who vomited hair measuring one meter, seven centimeters. We find Vera in almost all stories as a figure of the deadly magic that hunts Zango. It is only right then, that Malam Sadi Kankat, who Laminde meets to cast a spell on her co-wife, says "This is Zango, and here, we have assorted dreams and nightmares in bottles. You only need to choose one and it shall be yours."

In 'House of the Rising Sun', Mira loses her husband to insurgency and has to bear the burden of mourning him and taking care of their special needs child, Abba. The first thing that stands out in this story is the failure of the hospital to make a diagnosis to pinpoint what exactly is wrong with Abba. This incident rings painfully true for Nigerian readers, as we are likely to have witnessed or experienced such occurrences at least once in our lives. Abba hears voices in his head and succumbs to heavy fits of rage, so Mira has no choice but to lock him up in a room before she can go to work. This exposes the fact that there are no systems of support for the mothers of special needs children. The lack of support and infrastructure eventually leads Mira into depression.

Although all the stories in *Dreams and Assorted Nightmares* are majestic in their style and narration, 'House of the Rising Sun', 'Daughters of Bappa Avenue' and 'Weight of Silence' stand out to me because of their themes. In the final story, 'What the Sand Said', Ibrahim changes the plot and time setting by taking us back to the point when Vera vomited hair, we find ourselves at the beginning and the end of Zango. Kore, a dreaded armed robber and father to Zaki goes missing, Zaki finds the life tree (the very one whose falling of leaves causes death) and then takes a branch off it. Malam Sadi Kankat's prophesy of a leaf storm materializes, and Zango ends just as it begins.

Abubakar Adam Ibrahim's *Dreams and Assorted Nightmares* serves you prose unlike what you have read before on a platter of intrigue. This strange city of Zango where people die when leaves fall from the life tree reminds me of Eddie Murphy's *A Thousand Words* but I did not get the hopeful stories I expected. Dare to enter Zango but only if you can.

Written by Ude Ugo Anna

Poetry

THE SEA

What a wonderful thing
So beautiful and wonderful
With so many creatures
The blue sea whale
So majestic
So gigantic
So beautiful in all its ways

It rhymes with the blue sea
The Tilapia fish
With so many razor sharp teeth
Eating and destroying its prey
The Sea with so many great and
dangerous creatures
Oh! What a wonderful thing
All made by God

By Gabriel Idopise Obot is a JSS
2 student of the Nigerian
Christian Institute, Uyo.

Poetry

THE WIND AND WAVES

The Wind and Waves which blow
They blow the trees and everything
God made the wind and Waves
We feel their breeze
Thank God for making the wind
and wave

*By Unwanaobong Ime Ekwere, a
JSS 2 Student of Nigerian
Christian Institute (NCI), Uyo.*

RAIN

Suddenly
Clouds gang up
Lock up with mixed emotions,
anger and sadness
They cannot take anymore of
what we give to them

Some understand the event
that is unfolding in our
presence
But the others, especially
children do not

Sometimes they forgive us
But other times, it's painful for
them to bear
We let out what they gave us
as free water
Into mere mist- vapour at their
faces

Now they release their tears of
agony
They punish us with darkness
and whirlwind
Destroying our roofs and
flooding our shelter
They take our electricity and
overshadow us
They cannot take it anymore

They make mothers scream at
the children
Saying: O you naughty boy, o
you naughty girl, come inside

They just can't bear it again
And the let out their tears
In the form of Rain

*By Ufon Imo Etuk, a JSS 2
Student of Nigerian Christian
Institute (NCI), Uyo.*

SPOTLIGHT

- Highlighting UBC Activities
- World Book Day

UBC Celebrating World Book Day at Nigerian Christian Institute, Uyo.



UBC Celebrating World Book Day at Holy Child Primary School in Ikot Ekpen



Watbridge Launches Guest Library



UBC Visits CEO, Hensek Engineering Company, Uyo, Eng. Uwem Okoko

Watbridge

HOTELS & SUITES



UBC Launches The Brook Newsletter



Mr Anietie Usen with UBC Members on World Book Day 2021



At the Inauguration of Raffia City Book Club



Fourth from left, Maadiah Johnson, 16, Flanked by Family, Watbridge Advisor, Dr Ekong Sampson, UBC Founder, Dr Udemé Nana, during the launch of her book 'Clawed to Death' recently in Uyo.



Proudly hosts **Uyo Book Club Monthly**
...empowering intellectuality in hospitality

WINNER, Maiden Edition of UBC Puzzle



Meet **Precious Archibong Okon**, 21, winner of The Brook's maiden edition Crossword Puzzle. Precious is an undergraduate of Education/English, College of Education, Afaha Nsit.

Brain Teaser

Crossword Puzzle
Authors and Books



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| M ₉₇ | S ₉₈ | A ₉₉ | J ₁₀₀ | O ₁₀₁ | Y ₁₀₂ | Z ₁₀₃ | E ₁₀₄ | A ₁₀₅ | B ₁₀₆ | H ₁₀₇ | C ₁₀₈ | N ₁₀₉ | R ₁₁₀ | N ₁₁₁ | A ₁₁₂ |
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| E ₂₇₃ | E ₂₇₄ | I ₂₇₅ | W ₂₇ | O ₂₇₇ | L ₂₇₈ | E ₂₇₉ | S ₂₈₀ | O ₂₈₁ | Y ₂₈₂ | I ₂₈₃ | N ₂₈₄ | K ₂₈₅ | A ₂₈ | E ₂₈₇ | M ₂₈ |
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The Crossword Winners will get a Prize

TASK:

- Trace **BOOK TITLES AND AUTHORS** by listing the corresponding numbers of the alphabets that correctly spells the TITLES and AUTHORS. E.g. **HILL SONGS**(199, 184, 169, 154, 139, 124, 109, 94, 79); **JOE USHIE** (182, 167, 152, 137, 122, 107, 92, 77).
- For the purposes of this CROSSWORD PUZZLE, the usual spacing between words or letters for book titles and authors are to be ignored.
- Send your compilation by SMS to 08029295533 or email to uyobookclub2@gmail.com
- THERE ARE PRIZES TO BE WON FOR PERFECT SCORES AND EARLY SUBMISSION**
- TIP: Trace Horizontally, Vertically, Diagonally and in Reverse Direction.

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Titles and Authors of Books to Find

- THINGS FALL APART - CHINUA ACHEBE
- MACBETH - WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
- SAY YOU ARE ONE OF THEM - UWEM AKPAN
- THE MAN DIED - WOLE SOYINKA
- VILLAGE BOY - ANIETIE USEN
- NOT JUST A GIRL - NDUESO YOUNG
- THE CRUMB EATERS - MARTIN AKPAN
- NOT A SAFE PLACE - ANIEDI ETIM
- HILL SONGS - JOE USHIE
- EKON NKE - INI UBONG
- ANIMAL FARM - GEORGE ORWELL
- AGE OF VIDEOS - UDEME NANA
- TENANTS OF THE HOUSE - WALE OKEDIRAN
- DARE TO WIN - ANIEKEME FINBARR
- YOU HAVE A BRAIN - BEN CARSON
- A PROMISED LAND - BARACK OBAMA

BISHOP AHAZIAH UMANA: THE BOY WHO GOT WEDGED IN-BETWEEN BOMBS ON A QUEST FOR KNOWLEDGE

Just one book can change your life and set you on a new path of self-discovery leading to global impact. This fact is evident in the life of Bishop Ahaziah Umana the CEO of *Redemption FM 101.5*, Abak, Akwa Ibom State.

His story is one of courage, passion for knowledge, love for books and commitment to his faith and success. According to him, *“I love books because I lacked books due to my poor background. When I was schooling at Holy Family College Abak, (HOFACO), my nickname was Nocto notaries, a nocturnal creature. I only read at night when my colleagues who owned books were asleep. I would borrow their books and read in a secret location because the principal of the school didn't allow students to read at night.”*

Bishop Umana's passion for books and reading inspired further quest for knowledge and took him through tortuous paths and adventures. His first easy access to books was at The Agricultural College, Umudike. According to him, *“When I left HOFACO in 1962, I trekked barefooted from my home to Umudike for an interview as Agric Assistant-in-training. At the end of the interview, my legs were so swollen that I couldn't trek back home. So I trekked to the front door of E. U. Isong, the principal of the school. When he returned from work, he saw a young cranky boy in front of his house. He asked me, “What do you want?” I replied, “I want my results. I want to know whether I passed the interview and if I would be hired.”*

He took a look at my swollen legs and inquired what happened. I narrated my experience to him. Then he asked his wife to massage my legs with hot water. I was finally admitted into the school and lived in the school library. At the library, I saw the beauty of books and the knowledge in them. I saw how books can enrich your mind. That is how I had access to books which I still read now.

The quest for knowledge took Bishop Umana to the United States of America in search of the proverbial Golden Fleece. He confessed leaving his community at Ika Uruk Eshiet in Etim Ekpo to Calabar and entered the first plane that brought bombs to Calabar. The flight crew had no buffer for the bombs so he was asked to serve as a human buffer. It was his first flight in a plane and it was in a very precarious situation.

Bishop Umana's commitment to knowledge made him endure the harsh weather conditions of the USA, sometimes shuffling snow bare-bodied in the winter to earn a living. He graduated with perfect grades and received a personal commendation from the President of the college.

“A poor person who does not have a poor mind can get into riches, not 'rich' in terms of material possessions but in terms of the quality of the mind, caring for and serving others. Riches do not mean accumulation of earthly wealth but sharing of God's grace”.

Upon his return to Nigeria, the first thing he did was to establish a Book Scholarship at HOFACO so that students would have access to knowledge. Bishop Umana now has thousands of books in his library. He writes journals and contributes to poetry collections. Today, this gentleman is a renowned scholar, an intellectual, a clergyman, and an entrepreneur reaping the benefits of reading.

By NseAbasi Valentine and Iniobong Umoh

Quotable Quotes

“Never trust anyone who has not brought a book with them.”
- Lemony Snicket

“A capacity, and taste, for reading gives access to whatever has already been discovered by others.”
-Abraham Lincoln

“Let's be reasonable and add an eighth day to the week that is devoted exclusively to reading.”
- Lena Dunham

Tony Esu Centre for Leadership Should Outlive Me, My Prayer

- Abom Tony Esu

“The sad news is that we don't have people reading. The older people don't read; the younger people don't read. And again, for the younger people, one can find reason why they don't do it. If parents don't even read newspapers, not to talk of having books to read, how would the children read?” That is the central problem of our today's generation as figured out by Abom Tony Esu.



Upon his return to Akwa Ibom State in 1971 after the Civil War, Abom Tony Esu was privileged to start out his formal education journey in a very good school, where he had access to a well equipped library. His interest in reading books started when he was in Primary Four, and would transcend into a habit he already mastered in his secondary school days.

The boy-Esu got lured into reading in an attempt to escape punishment and labour drills from the senior students of the college. He got addicted to the smell of books, the comfy of book space and thrill from consuming contents in the pages he flipped over and over again. This was a clear case of evading punishment and benefiting from the unintended consequences. This environment he became used to, soon made him a book addict.

Would he get himself out of the holy addiction?

If he was going to be cured of this holy addiction, he would have given up on it when his first library was gutted by fire, causing a painful loss in the library. But no, with a holy anger, he put up another one; a richer collection and that became the Tony Esu Centre for Leadership.

Today, with resilience and consistency, Abom Tony Esu has one of the best equipped libraries, serene and comfortable; with collections spanning history, humanities, professions and just about all life concerns equipped with the future in mind. And, what is most endearing and revealing about his philanthropic nature is that he opened the doors of the centre to people who wish to develop themselves through reading. Even you reading this can go in there to read, free of charge. An interesting calculation Esu would give today about the library is that, he has lost count of how many books the library has.

Located in a noiseless and secure area in Ikot Ekpene, Akwa Ibom State, the almost solitary piece of artistic and literary glory was designed out of his passion to correct the ills in our nation, Nigeria. For Esu, his belief is not unconnected with the popular adage that **“readers are leaders.”** He believes that one major cause of the problem that has bedevilled Nigeria as a country comes from poor leadership. So, he thought that a better way to prepare the younger generation and create a lasting impact, was in offering a centre equipped with leadership instruments to build the right people with the right mindset.

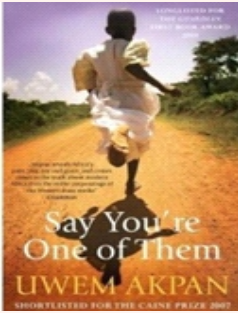
In his words: *“My desire was to allow people – even if you don't go to a formal school where you have to write examinations to pass, you can go there, spend one or two hours and read books and get educated. And, that's exactly my prayer.”* As one who believes that reading makes a whole man and places premium in a sustainable agenda, his prayer is that the future of the centre outlives him. *“It doesn't have to die when I die, so, it is backed by Charles Esu Foundation. The centre is an arm of Charles Esu Foundation, which is principally involved in the education service and the uplift of mankind.”*

“My concern now is to improve on it, get more books in and even get somebody from the academia on sabbatical, who would spend a year at the centre and contribute to knowledge.” Esu said.

Esu, who has served at the National Assembly as a representative of Ikot Ekpene Federal Constituency, has lived all his life in his home town. He is happy to serve as the patron of **Raffia City Book Club (RCBC)** in Ikot Ekpene, one of the recently inaugurated literary clubs founded by the leader of Akwa Ibom Network of Book Clubs, Dr Udeme Nana. Esu, who is not just the host of RCBC, but also, the founder of the Esu Center for Leadership, pledges to give all the needed support for the literary club to stand.

By NseAbasi Valentine and Hanson Uko

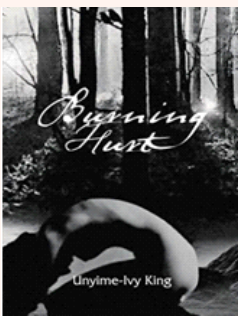
We are of the opinion that instead of letting books grow moldy behind an iron grating, far from the vulgar gaze, it is better to let them wear out by being read. - Jules Verne



Say You're One of Them

by Uwem Akpan

Say You're One of Them is a collection of short stories by Nigerian writer Uwem Akpan, first published in 2008. Containing five stories, each set in a different African country, this collection won the 2009 Commonwealth Writers Prize and the 2009 Beyond Margins Award. It was chosen as the 63rd selection by the Oprah Book Club in 2009.



Burning Hurt

by Unyime Ivy King

The story of a young girl raised in a dysfunctional home. Neglected, she witnesses as her family deteriorates. Her father dies and her mother re-marries. Situations at home didn't get any better. She finds love in Daniel which gives her respite from challenges at home. The relationship is soon shattered by unexpected life event. Will she surmount her storms? Find out.



Clawed to Death

by Maadiah Aniekan Johnson

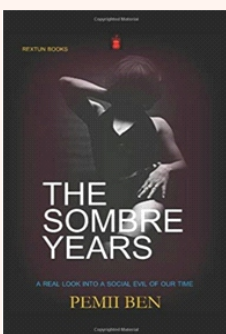
The novel Clawed to Death, is an intriguing sci-fi series book. It tells the story of a teenage boy that's in an intricate world of his own, after his father's passing. He is being hunted by mysteries and events he is not prepared for. He has to stand his ground on his own and suppress the shadows that lurk in the dark. But to achieve this, he has to be someone else, he has to be something else.



More Than Just a Girl!

by Ndueso Young

It is a self help material that is written to inspire young women to go in pursuit of lofty heights and an overall life of greater objectivity, value, relevance, fulfilment and personal greatness. The book is written and designed to challenge the mindset of an average young woman to gain courage to live her dreams and go beyond the feminine gender identity to becoming more than just a girl!



The Sombre Years

by Pemii Ben

The book investigates the actual causes of commercial sex in Nigeria and in the West African subregion. The book also brings forth the appalling overtures of the trade and its multilateral denigrating effects on women and the girl-child. Written in the format of a novel, with Ito as the protagonist, the book is a virile material for women's rights activists, law enforcement agents, legal practitioners, clergymen/women, guidance counselors, and the general public.