**Women, Oppression, and Resistance in *Nervous Conditions*.**

In the opening to *Nervous Conditions*, the narrator Tambudzai provides a taxonomy of women’s experience: she and Lucia **“escape”;** her mother and Maiguru are **“entrapped”;** and Nyasha **“rebels”.** For the character assigned to your group:

* Do you agree with Tambu’s assessment of her? (examples?)
* How does she experience expectations based on gender roles and how does she perform her gendered role?
* How does your assessment of the character reflect your own biases and assumptions about ‘proper’ gender roles, feminism, Africa, etc.?

1. **Lucia**

* 127 Lucia remains plump in spite of her tribulations
* 146-7 Lucia confronts the family patriarchy *dare*
* 155-6 Lucia decides to stay and take care of her sister
* 160-1 Lucia is a given a job by Babamakuru
* 173-4 Lucia defends Tambu decision not to attend the wedding; regarded as an honorary man.

1. **Tambu**

* 23 fights Nhamo because he is stealing her maize
* 58-9 emancipation; 94 reincarnation/clean
* 165 wedding makes a mockery of her parents; 168 out of body experience/paralysis?
* 198-99 path to progress at Sacred Heart – in a sea of white faces
* 208 final paragraph

1. **Maiguru**

* 79-81 – Tambu and Nyasha talk about Maiguru; Maiguru fawns over Babamukuru
* 102-4 on Maiguru’s education and how this impacts her social status
* 140-1 Maiguru explains she is not part of totem, so *dare* is not her concern
* 174-77 Maiguru challenges Babamukuru and leaves for a few days
* 184 on prejudice against educated women

1. **Tambu’s mother, Ma’Shingayi**

* 16 guidance to Tambu regarding the pressures of gender and race
* 25 refuses to tell Tambu she cannot go to town to sell maize
* 91 Tambu reflects on how her mother is a woman, black, and uneducated
* 139, 142-4 Ma’Shingayi anger
* 187 Ma’Shingayi’s reaction to Babamukuru deciding to let Tambu take up the scholarship at Sacred Heart. Stops eating/working

1. **Nyasha**

* 95, 200 kids don’t like Nyasha because she acts white
* 115-118 conflict with Babamakuru – decency, violence
* 137 – angles more attractive than curves
* 189-90, 197-98, 201-2 anorexia, bulimia / decency and body image
* 204-5 Nyasha’s breakdown