# Hannah Chukwu on her chosen books

Hannah Chukwu: If it's that really books that have stuck with me, then the first one is *Red Dust Road* by Jackie Kay, a phenomenal memoir about Jackie Kay. She's an amazing writer, and I read that book when I was, I think, 14 or 15 and it was the first time that I saw myself at all represented in literature. And this is as someone who would read constantly, would read on the bus, would read like in form before school. I read so much. And that was the first time that I kind of felt I saw myself represented and our stories are eerily similar. Her parents are half-Nigerian, half-Scottish which is the same as mine. And then she lived in Manchester, where I did as well, and she studied English, and all of these things. So there was a lot of overlap, but that really was like a ground-breaking moment and kind of talking about her struggles and her triumphs and kind of like visiting her family for the first time and reckoning with her identity. I kind of held onto it through all of those experiences and it meant a lot to be kind of going through university and having that book with me.

Then the author that I really want to talk about is Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. She’s one of my favourite authors, and I think I'll recommend *Half of A Yellow Sun* here again, as a book that was really pivotal to me. So my dad's from Nigeria and this was the book that kind of taught me about my own history, basically. I kind of didn't know anything, aside from the snippets my father told me about how Nigeria became what it is today. And it's just a really fantastic story that kind of is looking at that and kind of bringing that tidbit to the world's attention.

Yeah, that's a fantastic story, but I wasn't sure whether to kind of talk about that or *Americanah*, which I wrote my dissertation on, which is also an amazing work of hers, which kind of also spans the US and the UK as well and kind of looks at the interactions between those places, which I think is like really a vital text.