Text for Feona Attwood

Feona Attwood is a Professor in the Media Department at Middlesex University, UK.

Her research is in the area of sex in contemporary culture; and in particular, in onscenity; sexualization; sexual cultures; new technologies, identity and the body; and controversial media.

She is the editor of ‘Mainstreaming Sex: The Sexualization of Western Culture’ (2009), ‘porn.com: Making Sense of Online Pornography’ (2010) and (with Vincent Campbell, I.Q. Hunter and Sharon Lockyer) ’Controversial Images’ (2012) and the co-editor of journal special issues on Controversial Images (with Sharon Lockyer, ‘Popular Communication’, 2009), Researching and Teaching Sexually Explicit Media (with I.Q. Hunter, ‘Sexualities’, 2009), and Investigating Young People’s Sexual Cultures (with Clarissa Smith, ‘Sex Education’, 2011).

Her recent publications have focused on online culture, aesthetics, sex and the media, and public engagement.

She is leading an international research network on onscenity, funded by the AHRC and is at the start of an AHRC Fellowship project. Her current book project is ‘Sex, Media Technology’*.*

*Text for Josie Barnard*

Josie Barnard is the author of five books, ranging from her recent creative non-fiction ‘The Book of Friendship’ (‘fascinating’, Guardian; ‘discerning’, Observer) to the novels ‘Poker Face’, which won the Betty Trask Award and was made into a Film Four short, and ‘The Pleasure Dome’, which was described by Gavin Turk in Tatler as, ‘A sexy new novel’.  She has produced/presented radio strands, features and programmes for the BBC (including co-presenting a GLR strand with Mariella Frostrup). Barnard has worked as an editor and journalist, writing features and reviews for newspapers and magazines including the Guardian, the Telegraph and the TLS.  Now Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing with Journalism here at Middlesex University, she has spoken at festivals including Cheltenham and Dartington. You can follow Josie on Twitter: @josiebarnard

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Text for Maggie Butt

Maggie Butt’s publications include four poetry collections.  Her latest book ‘Sancti Clandestini–Undercover Saints’, is sumptuously illustrated by staff and students of Middlesex University’s BA Illustration programme. An exhibition to accompany the book was held at The Poetry Cafe in Covent Garden.

Maggie’s poetry is widely published in international magazines and has escaped the page onto the internet, choreography, BBC Radio 4, readings, festivals, and schools.

Her first full collection, ‘[Lipstick](http://www.maggiebutt.co.uk/lipstick)‘, was published in 2007,  a collection of short poems, ‘petite’, in 2010 and ‘Ally Pally Prison Camp’, the story of 3,000 civilians imprisoned at Alexandra Palace during the First World War, in 2011.  Her edited collection of essays: ‘Story The Heart of the Matter’ was published in 2007.

Maggie returned to poetry after a career spanning many other forms of writing. After an English degree she became a newspaper reporter, moving to BBC TV as a documentary writer/producer/director.

She is a Deputy Dean at Middlesex University, London, England, where she taught on the Creative and Media Writing degree. She has been Chair of the Subject Association for Creative Writing and recently written the new Creative Writing A Level.

Maggie has a PhD in creative writing from Cardiff University and is a University Teaching Fellow and University Orator.

Text for James Charlton

James Martin Charlton has written for stage, television and screen. His plays include *Fat Souls* [winner of International Playwriting Festival, nominated Writers Guild Best Fringe Play], ‘Coming Up’ (Warehouse Theatre, Croydon); an adaptation of ‘The Pilgrim’s Progress’ for the RSC; ‘ecstasy + GRACE’ (Finborough Theatre), ‘The World and his Wife, I Really Must be Getting Off’ (White Bear), Battis Boy (Paines Plough at Trafalgar Studios), ‘Fellow Creature’ (Miniaturists at Arcola) and ‘Coward’ (Just Some Theatre); ‘Coward’ will be released as an audio drama in early 2013.

He wrote & directed the short films ‘Apeth’ (2007) & *Academic* (2011). He lectures on Scriptwriting at Middlesex University (both BA and Postgraduate levels) and Birkbeck College.

Text for Lorna Gibb

Lorna was born in Bellshill, Scotland and worked as a dancer in Italy and the UK before going to University in London. She took her PhD at Edinburgh and has subsequently lectured in various countries including Finland, the former USSR, the Netherlands, Austria and the Middle East. Her first book *Lady Hester* was published in 2005. Lorna loves the opera, good food, movies, a wide variety of music from Tori Amos to Puccini and Jan Garbarek and is a member of the Royal Overseas League. She has watched the soap opera*Neighbours*since she was a student with frequent gaps for travelling. She now lives in London with her Dutch-Kiwi husband, a Spanish car and several cats, from Qatar, Italy and the UK.

Text for David Rain

With Sophie Tucker belting from his hand-crank phonograph and a circle of boarding-school admirers laughing uproariously around him, we first meet Ben “Trouble” Pinkerton through the amazed eyes of his orphaned schoolmate Woodley Sharpless – and ever after, though their paths at times diverge,  their lives continue to intersect.

Trouble, the son of Lieutenant Benjamin Pinkerton and the geisha Madame Butterfly, is being raised in the United States, by (now) Senator Pinkerton and his upper-class wife, Kate. From early on, Trouble’s privileged upbringing and rebellious charisma combine to involve him in many important events of the twentieth century: from Greenwich Village in the roaring twenties, through WPA work during the Great Depression; from secret government work outside Los Alamos, to a revelation on a Nagasaki hillside by the sea. Woodley Sharpless witnesses these events, too – along with plenty of Pinkerton family drama.

David Rain’s first novel is a high-wire act of sustained invention – as playful as it is ambitious, as moving as it is theatrical, and as historically resonant as it is evocative of the powerful bonds of friendship and of love.