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JESSIE THOMPSON, *THE INDEPENDENT*

Bedsit land by Patrick Clarke

‘A fascinating exploration of Soft Cell.’

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Image credit: *Ena and Betty, Daughters of Asher and Mrs. Wertheimer*, 1901. Oil on canvas. Tate. Presented by the widow and family of Asher Wertheimer in accordance with his wishes, 1922. Photograph: Tate.

Family Romance: *John Singer Sargent and the Wertheimers*

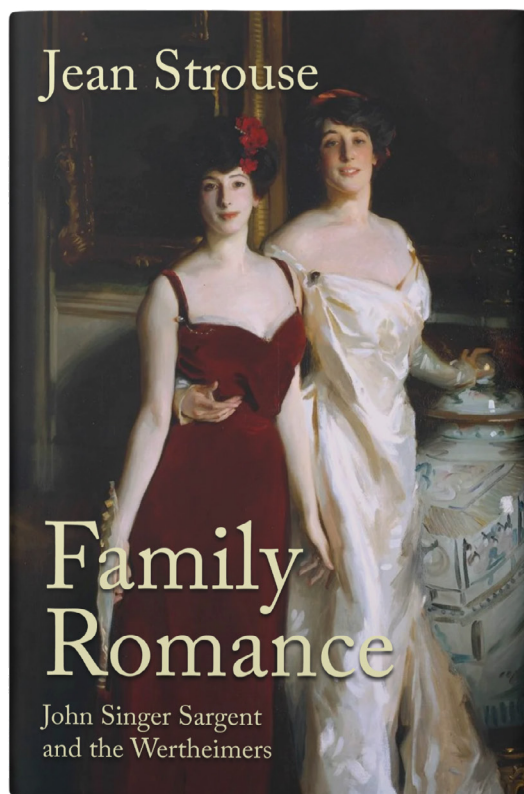
Jean Strouse

‘A deeply informed, acutely
sensitive cultural history.’

Kirkus Reviews

‘A nuanced portrait of a world in
flux.’

Publishers Weekly



In *Family Romance*, Jean Strouse tells the story of John Singer Sargent and his relationship with the Wertheimer family, structured around the twelve portraits he painted of them between 1898 and 1908.

Asher Wertheimer was a London art dealer of German-Jewish descent. A prominent figure of the Edwardian age, he was at ease among Rothschilds, royals, journalists and aristocrats. In commissioning Sargent to paint a series of portraits of his family, he became the American expatriate artist's most important patron, as well as a close personal friend.

Recreating the world of turn-of-the-century London, Strouse gives a dramatic account of these extraordinary lives, a tale that encompasses intrigue, tragedy and resounding success. At the same time she traces the decline of the British aristocracy and the rise of new power and wealth on both sides of the Atlantic, a transformation that Sargent captured brilliantly in his art.

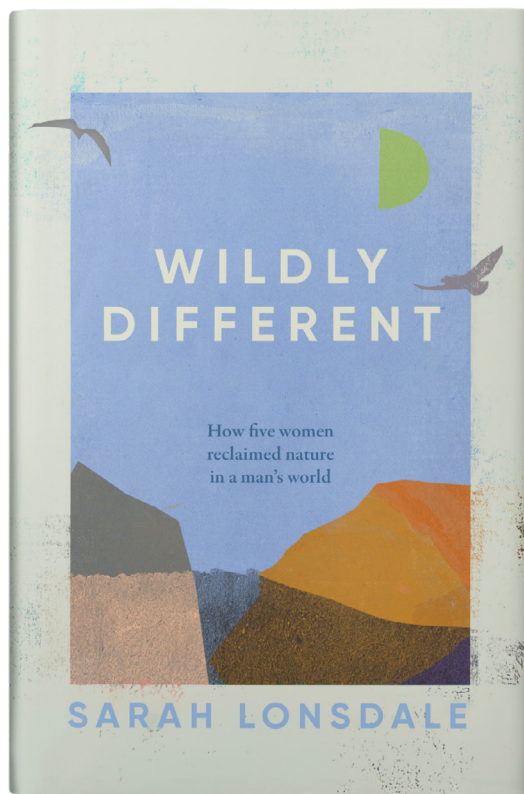
Jean Strouse is the author of *Morgan: American Financier* and *Alice James: A Biography*, which won the Bancroft Prize in American History and Diplomacy. Her essays and reviews have appeared in the *New Yorker*, the *New York Review of Books*, the *New York Times*, *Architectural Digest* and *Newsweek*. Strouse has been a Fellow of the MacArthur Foundation and served as the Sue Ann and John Weinberg Director of the Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Center for Scholars and Writers at the New York Public Library from 2003 to 2017. She lives in New York City.

Wildly different: *How five women reclaimed nature in a man's world*

Sarah Lonsdale

‘Nothing has brought home to me with more force the relationship between gender and the natural world.’

Frances Wilson, author of
The Ballad of Dorothy Wordsworth



For millennia the ‘wild’ was a place heroic men went on epic quests. Women were prevented from joining them, either through physical control or powerful myths about what would happen if they ventured beyond the city wall or village boundary. So how did women claim their place in the remote and lovely parts of our planet?

In *Wildly different*, historian Sarah Lonsdale traces the lives of five women who fought for the right to work in, enjoy and help to save the earth’s wild places. We’ll meet Mina Hubbard, who outraged the exploration community when she stepped into a canoe in northern Labrador. Evelyn Cheesman, who became the first female keeper of insects at London Zoo. Dorothy Pilley, who shocked polite society by donning men’s climbing breeches. Ethel Haythornthwaite, who helped make the Peak District Britain’s first National Park. And Wangari Maathai, who started a movement to plant millions of trees across sub-Saharan Africa.

Drawing on interviews with Sir David Attenborough, Wangari Maathai’s daughter and others, Lonsdale recounts the women’s adventures across five continents. Evocative and inspiring, this book shows how women can be ‘wildly different’.

Sarah Lonsdale is Senior Lecturer in Journalism at City, University of London. She is the author of the books *Rebel Women between the Wars* (2020) and *The Journalist in British Fiction and Film* (2016) and writes for the *Times Literary Supplement*, *History Today* and the *Sunday Times*.

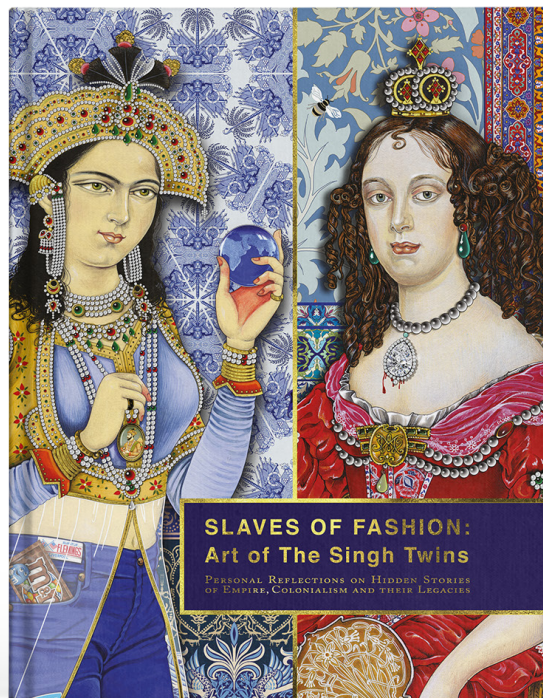
✉ @SarahJLonsdale

Slaves of Fashion:

Art of the Singh Twins: Personal Reflections on Hidden Stories of Empire, Colonialism and their Legacies

The Singh Twins

A stunning art book showcasing
The Singh Twins' 'Slaves of
Fashion' series.




This richly illustrated, artist-designed book showcases 'Slaves of Fashion', an award-winning series of portrait-based allegorical and narrative works by contemporary British artists The Singh Twins.

'Slaves of Fashion' explores diverse histories and legacies of empire and colonialism through the history of Indian textiles. It is a global story of conflict, conquest, exploitation, slavery, intercultural exchange and changing fashion. The series connects these themes to the trade in luxury goods during an age of maritime exploration, colonisation and industrialisation – all driven by the commercial interests of competing and expanding European imperial powers, from the fifteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries.

The book includes detailed interpretations of the artworks, representing The Singh Twins' personal reflections on this story and its relevance to topical debates around racism, cultural ownership, decolonisation, ethical trade and consumerism. It also offers insight into the making of the artworks, which draw on academic research, historical archives and museum collections. The book closes with an essay by Professor Kate Marsh.

The Singh Twins are internationally recognised contemporary British artists, known for their highly detailed narrative, symbolic and eclectic style combining hand-painted and digital techniques. Through their work, which they describe as Past-Modern, the twins comment on modern-day society, politics and culture, challenge Eurocentrism in the art world and demonstrate the contemporary relevance of history and tradition. They have each received an MBE from HRH Queen Elizabeth II, and several honorary doctorates for their contribution to art.

 @thesinghtwins

 thesinghtwins_art

This book has been produced with the generous support of SikhLens, USA. SikhLens is a non-profit organisation based in California that is dedicated to promoting Sikh history, heritage and culture across the globe through diverse educational and arts initiatives, and grants.

Writing creatively for work or study: *Easy techniques to engage your readers*

Helen Kara

A unique guide featuring tips for improving your professional writing through creative formats and techniques.

Workplace writing doesn't have to be dull. In fact, there's evidence that more creative approaches can capture a reader's interest and increase the accessibility, comprehension and memorability of the most everyday documents.

Writing creatively for work or study shows you how to apply formats and techniques from creative writing to professional communication. Whether you're creating a business plan, a sales report or terms and conditions, simple principles such as establishing tension, using sensory language and employing well-chosen metaphors can engage a reader's emotions, turning a drab piece of prose into something memorable. At the more inventive end of the scale, documents in the form of novels, comic books or even film scripts can have a dramatic impact and ensure your work makes a lasting impression.

Featuring a wealth of real-life examples, plus exercises to help you develop your skills, *Writing creatively for work or study* proves that writing for work can also be fun.



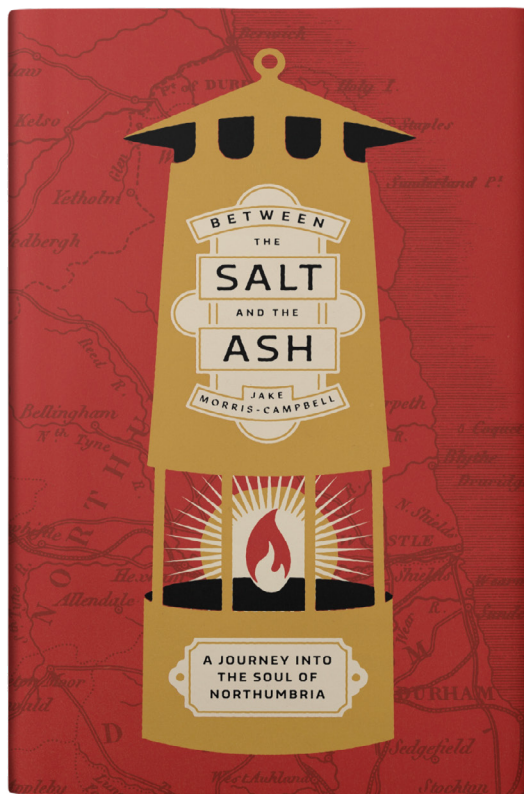
Helen Kara is an independent researcher, scholar and author. She is the author of several books, including *Creative Research Methods: A Practical Guide* (2020), and has been teaching creative professional writing to people from a wide variety of occupations and workplaces since 2015.

✉ @DrHelenKara

Between the salt and the ash: *A journey into the soul of Northumbria*

Jake Morris-Campbell

A writer's quest to understand the deep past and uncertain future of his homeland.



After inheriting the miner's safety lamp that belonged to his great-grandfather, Jake Morris-Campbell sets out on a pilgrimage across his homeland. Travelling from the Holy Island of Lindisfarne to Durham Cathedral, he asks what new ways might be made through the old north.

This region, a hub of early Christian Britain and later strongly defined by industry and class, now faces an uncertain future. But it remains a unique and starkly beautiful part of the country, with a deep history that is intimately entwined with the idea of Englishness. Jake's journey along the 'Camino of the North' sees him explore the shifting nature of individual and regional identity across thirteen-hundred years of social change. At the same time, it challenges him to reconsider his own calling as a writer and how it relates to the lives of the people he meets along the way.

Between the salt and the ash asks what stories the North East can tell about itself in the wake of Christianity and coal. Rejecting the damaging trope of 'left behind' communities, Jake uncovers neglected seams of culture and history, while offering a heartfelt celebration of the place he calls hyem.

Jake Morris-Campbell was born in South Shields in 1988. His collection of poetry *Corrigenda for Costafine Town* (2021) was longlisted for the RSL Ondaatje Prize. A BBC New Generation Thinker, he regularly appears on Radio 3. Recent commissions include writing for the Lindisfarne Gospels exhibition at The Laing Gallery, Newcastle and for the After Dark Festival at The Glasshouse, Gateshead. He is co-editor of *Marratide: Selected Poems of William Martin* (2025) and currently works as Teaching Fellow in Creative Writing at Liverpool John Moores University.

✉ @jakecampbell88

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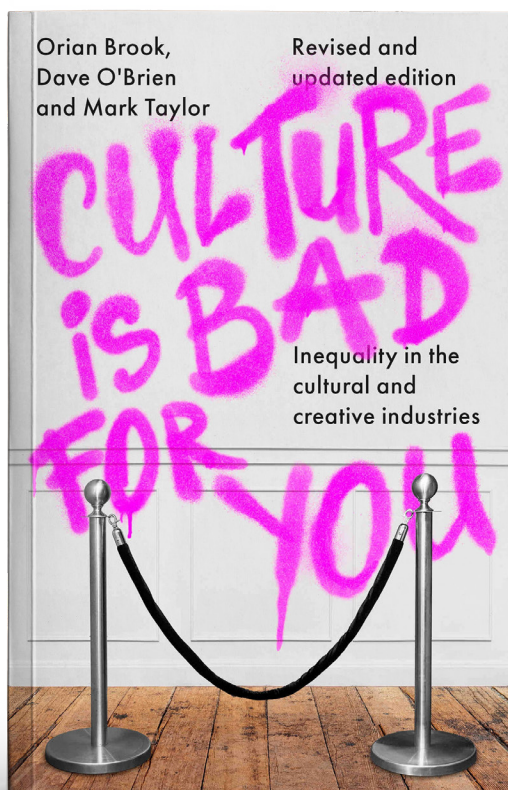
Culture is bad for you:

Inequality in the cultural and creative industries, revised and updated edition

Orian Brook, Dave O'Brien and Mark Taylor

'This book does more than it says on the tin.'

Kit de Waal, author of *My Name is Leon*



Culture keeps you fit and healthy. Culture brings communities together. Culture improves your education. This is the message endlessly repeated by the government and arts organisations. But as this ground-breaking book explains, we need to be cautious about culture.

Culture is bad for you presents an unflinching portrait of the cultural landscape in the UK today. It reveals how women, people of colour and those from working-class backgrounds are systematically excluded, despite the claims of cultural institutions and businesses. Updated to provide a report on the situation after COVID, this edition reveals that despite grand promises from those at the top, exclusion and precarity remain the norm.

While inequalities of workforce and audience remain unaddressed, the positive contribution culture makes to society can never be fully realised. This book offers a powerful call to transform cultural and creative industries.

Orian Brook is a Chancellor's Fellow in Social Policy at the University of Edinburgh

Dave O'Brien is a Professor of Cultural and Creative Industries at the University of Manchester

Mark Taylor is a Senior Lecturer in Quantitative Methods at the University of Sheffield

✕ @OrianBrook

✕ @DrDaveOBrien

✕ @markrt

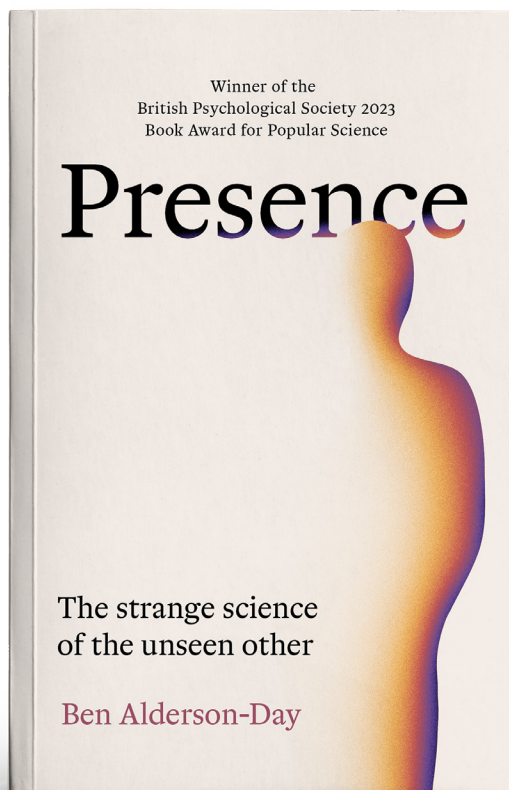
Presence: *The strange science of the unseen other*

Ben Alderson-Day

Winner of the British Psychological Society 2023 Book Award for Popular Science

'Presence is a fascinating read.'

Jason Arunn Murugesu, *New Scientist*



We all know the feeling: you're alone but it's like there's someone there with you – a mysterious presence lurking just out of sight. Throughout history this experience has been the subject of religious and supernatural speculation. But does science have the answer?

In *Presence*, psychologist Ben Alderson-Day digs into historical accounts and contemporary cases of 'felt presence', hunting for the key to unlock this strange phenomenon. He interviews ultrarunners and ocean rowers, who often report the sensation of being accompanied on their journeys, and examines the latest work on sleep paralysis, dementia and Parkinson's, conditions closely associated with feeling the presence of someone or something that isn't there.

His findings, built on cutting-edge research from psychology and neuroscience, provide remarkable new insights into this longstanding mystery of the human mind.

Ben Alderson-Day is a Professor of Psychology and a Fellow of the Institute for Medical Humanities at Durham University. A specialist in atypical cognition and mental health, his work spans cognitive neuroscience, psychiatry, philosophy and child development.

 @aldersonday

The return of the housewife: *Why women are still cleaning up*

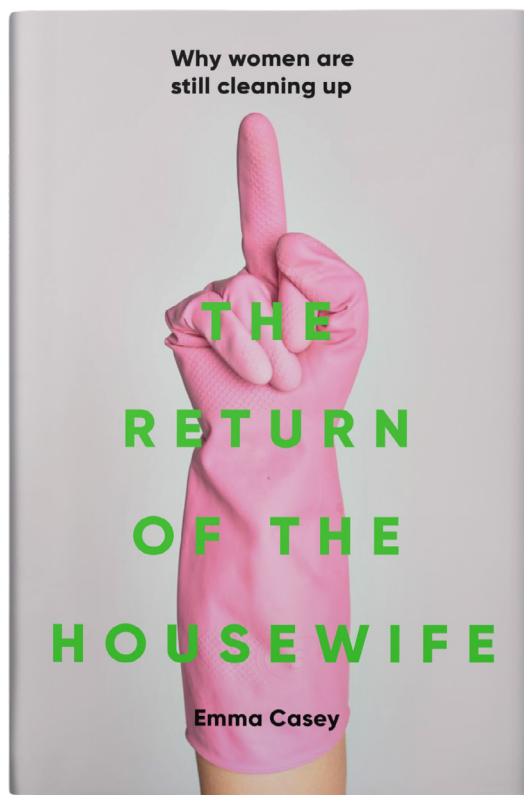
Emma Casey

An illuminating look at the world of cleanfluencers that asks why the burden of housework still falls on women.

Housework is good for you. Housework sparks joy. Housework is beautiful. Housework is glamorous. Housework is key to a happy family. Housework shows that you care. Housework is women's work.

Social media is flooded with images of the perfect housewife. TikTok and Instagram 'cleanfluencers' produce endless photos and videos of women cleaning, tidying and putting things right. Figures such as Marie Kondo and Mrs Hinch have placed housework, with its promise of a life of love and contentment, at the centre of self-care and positive thinking.

And yet housework remains one of the world's most unequal institutions. Women, especially poorer women and women of colour, do most low-paid and unpaid domestic labour. In *The return of the housewife*, Emma Casey asks why these inequalities matter and why they persist after a century of dramatic advances in women's rights. She offers a powerful call to challenge the prevailing myths around housework and the 'naturally competent' woman homemaker.



Emma Casey is a Reader in Sociology at the University of York. She is the author of the book *Women, Pleasure and the Gambling Experience* (2008) and has contributed to the BBC Thinking Allowed podcast.

✕ @EmmaHCasey

Studio Electrophonique: *The Sheffield space age, from The Human League to Pulp*

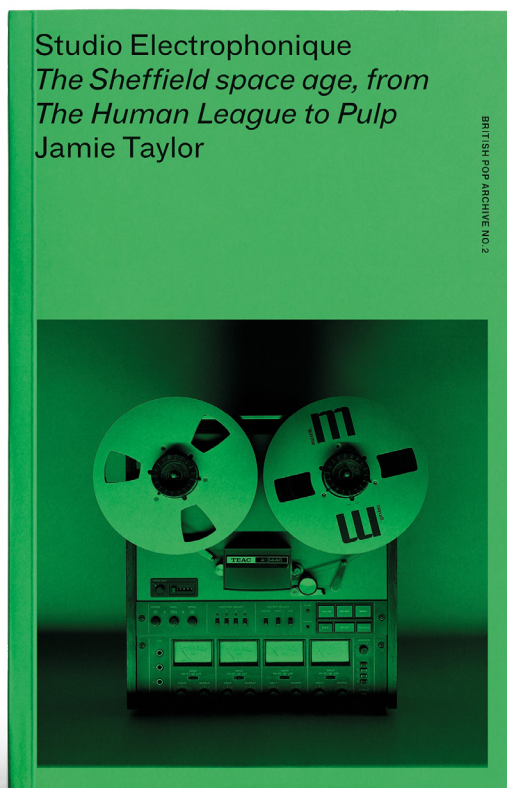
Jamie Taylor

The amazing story of the home studio that helped launch some of Britain's most beloved bands.

The Sheffield space age began in 1961, when local mechanic Ken Patten won a tape-recording competition by recreating the sound of a rocket launch using a pencil and a bicycle pump.

In the decades that followed, the makeshift home studio he constructed became the launch pad for a group of young musicians who would shape the futuristic sound of 1980s pop. The Human League, Heaven 17, Pulp, ABC and others made their early recordings with Ken, whose DIY ethic was the perfect fit for a city facing industrial decline but teeming with ideas.

Studio Electrophonique tells the story of a generation seeking new frontiers in music, using everything they could lay their hands on – from science fiction novels to glam rock, Dada art and cheap electronics – to get there. Drawing on original interviews with Jarvis Cocker, Martyn Ware, Mark White and others, it brings to light a world of humour, charm, creativity and unfounded yet undaunted self-belief.

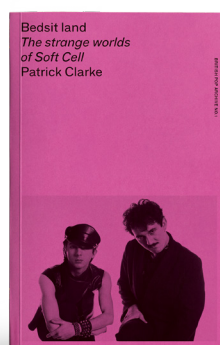


Series: British Pop Archive

Jamie Taylor is a writer and filmmaker from Sheffield. He is the director of *The Campaigners* and *A Film about Studio Electrophonique*.

✕ @JamieTaylorvRS

Also in this series



Bedsit land: *The strange worlds of Soft Cell*

Patrick Clarke

September 2024
£12.99 | \$18.95 | Paperback
9781526173560 | 198x129mm
256 pages

Barbara Comyns: *A savage innocence*

Avril Horner

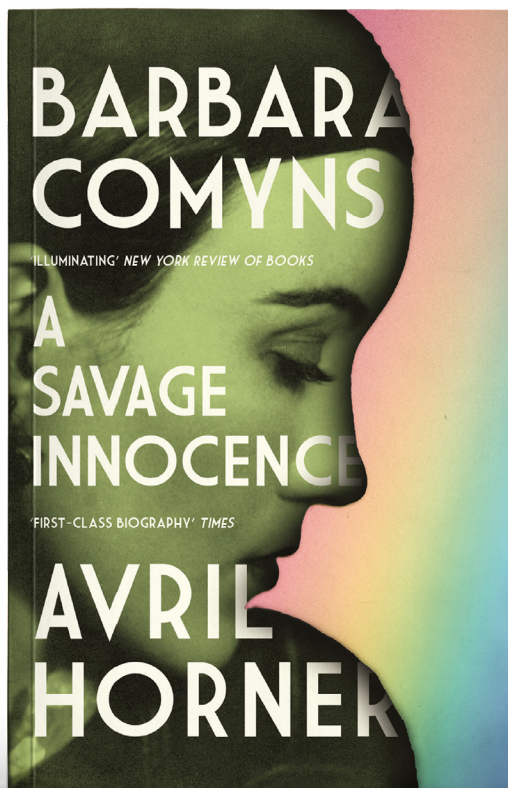
One of *The Independent's*
best biographies of 2024.

'First-class biography'

Roger Lewis, the *Independent*

'Illuminating'

Jé Wilson, *New York Review of Books*



The extraordinary twentieth-century writer Barbara Comyns led a life as captivating as the narratives she spun. This pioneering biography reveals the journey of a woman who experienced hardship and single-motherhood before the age of thirty but went on to publish a sequence of novels unique in the English language.

Comyns turned her hand to many jobs in order to survive, from artist's model to piano restorer. Unpublished letters reveal an occasionally desperate but resourceful and witty woman whose life ranged from enduring poverty when young to mixing with spivs, spies and high society. While working as a housekeeper in her mid-thirties, Comyns began transforming the bleak episodes of her life into compelling fictions streaked with surrealism and deadpan humour.

The Vet's Daughter (1959), championed by Graham Greene, brought her fame, although her use of the gothic and macabre divided readers and reviewers.

This biography excavates Comyns's life and reclaims her fiction, providing a timely reassessment of her literary contribution. It sheds new light on a remarkable author who deftly captured the complexities of human life.

Avril Horner is an Emeritus Professor of English at Kingston University. She is the author or editor of numerous books, most recently *Women and the Gothic* with Sue Zlosnik (2016) and *Living on Paper: Letters from Iris Murdoch 1934–95* with Anne Rowe (2015).

✕ @avrilhorner1

Welcome to the club: *The life and lessons of a Black woman DJ*

DJ Paulette

‘Icon. Trailblazer. Activist. Warrior.’

Maxine Peake, actress and activist

‘Told with wit and honesty.’

The Skinny



In *Welcome to the club*, Manchester legend DJ Paulette shares the highs, lows and lessons of her thirty-year music career, with insights from some famous friends.

As one of the Hacienda’s pioneering female DJs, Paulette has reached the pinnacle of the music industry, performing for crowds of thousands worldwide. She offers a remarkable perspective from a Black woman’s viewpoint, arguing that despite dance music’s core values of peace, love, unity and respect, it remains a world rife with exclusion, misogyny, racism and classism. Yet, as Paulette reveals, it is also a space teeming with powerful women.

Part personal memoir, part call to action, *Welcome to the club* exposes the exclusivity of the music industry while honouring the often invisible women who keep the rhythm alive.

DJ Paulette is an award-winning DJ whose thirty-year career has seen her play some of the world’s greatest parties, from Manchester’s Hacienda to Ibiza Rocks and the Ministry of Sound

✕ @DjPaulette

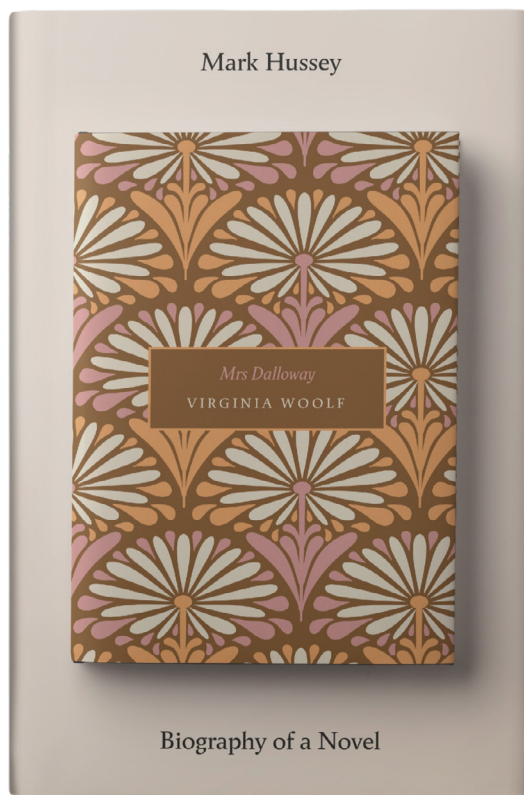
© dj_paulette1

Mrs Dalloway:

Biography of a novel

Mark Hussey

The first book in the 'Biography of a novel' series offers a compelling account of Virginia Woolf's masterpiece.



The fourth and best-known of Virginia Woolf's novels, *Mrs Dalloway* is a modernist masterpiece that has remained popular since its publication in 1925. Its dual narratives follow a day in the life of wealthy housewife Clarissa Dalloway and shell-shocked war veteran Septimus Warren Smith, capturing their inner worlds with a vividness that has rarely been equalled.

Mrs Dalloway: Biography of a novel offers new readers a lively introduction to this enduring classic, while providing Woolf lovers with a wealth of information about the novel's writing, publication and reception. It follows Woolf's process from the first stirrings in her diary through her struggles to create what was quickly recognised as a major advance in prose fiction. It then traces the novel's remarkable legacy to the present day.

Woolf wrote in her diary that she wanted her novel 'to give life & death, sanity & insanity... to criticise the social system, & to show it at work, at its most intense.' *Mrs Dalloway: Biography of a novel* reveals how she achieved this ambition, creating a book that will be read by generations to come.

Series: Biography of a Novel

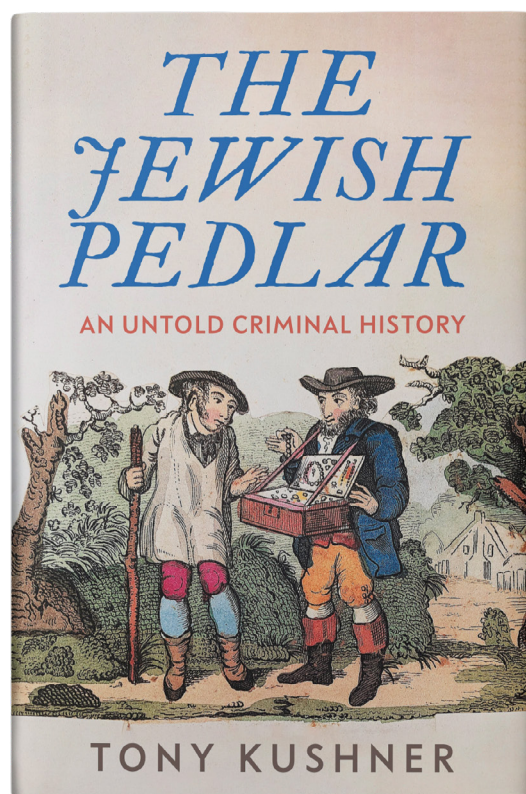
Mark Hussey is Distinguished Professor of English Emeritus at Pace University in New York. He is founding editor of *Woolf Studies Annual* and general editor of the Harcourt Annotated Edition of the Works of Virginia Woolf, for which he edited *To the Lighthouse*. His recent publications include *Clive Bell and the Making of Modernism* (2022) and *Modernism's Print Cultures* (with Faye Hammill, 2016).

© markhusseybooks

The Jewish pedlar: *An untold criminal history*

Tony Kushner

An imaginative investigation into a historical crime that sheds new light on Jewish history.



In 1734 a pedlar turned smuggler named Jacob Harris slit the throats of three people in a pub in Sussex. This triple-murder, for which he was hanged and gibbeted, remains the most violent crime ever committed by a British Jew. Yet today it is all but forgotten.

In *The Jewish pedlar*, Tony Kushner goes in search of the enigmatic Harris. Digging into a remarkable range of sources, from law records and newspaper reports to ballads and folktales, he follows the traces of Harris's legend across three hundred years of British history. In doing so, he reconstructs the world of Jewish pedlars and criminals across many continents. The lives these figures eked out at the margins of society paint a picture of persistent antisemitism – but also of remarkable integration.

Intellectually bold and deeply humane, *The Jewish pedlar* takes a new, grassroots approach to the history of Jews in the modern world, shedding light on everyday lives from the Enlightenment to the Holocaust and beyond.

Tony Kushner is James Parkes Professor of Jewish/Non-Jewish Relations at the University of Southampton. He is the author of numerous books, including *Journeys from the Abyss: The Holocaust and Forced Migration from the 1880s to the Present* (2017) and *Anglo-Jewry since 1066: Place, Memory and Locality* (2009).

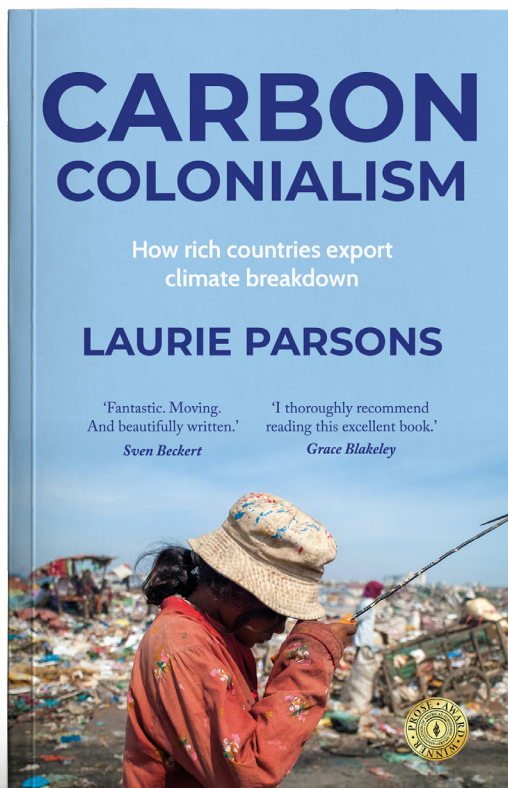
Carbon colonialism: *How rich countries export climate breakdown*

Laurie Parsons

**Winner of the 2024
AAP PROSE Award for
Economics and shortlisted
for the Penn Libraries Book
Prize in Sustainability**

‘Fantastic. Moving. And
beautifully written.’

Sven Beckert, author of *Empire of Cotton*



Around the world, leading economies are announcing significant success in the struggle against climate change. Heads of government proclaim their commitment to tackling the crisis, pointing to data that shows the progress they have made. Yet the atmosphere is still warming at a record rate. Are we being deceived?

In *Carbon colonialism*, Laurie Parsons exposes how rich countries cook the books on climate change – by outsourcing it to the global South. Conducting first-hand research across Asia, he reveals how exporting emissions and waste allows states and corporations to maintain a clean, green image. Meanwhile, landfills expand and droughts and floods intensify, with devastating effects on the world’s most vulnerable communities.

Technical fixes and creative accounting are a mirage. The real obstacles to effective action are deeply embedded in the political systems and structures of our society. Parsons calls on readers to wake up from the fairy tales of greenwashing and ethical consumerism and end carbon colonialism now.

Laurie Parsons is Reader in Human Geography at Royal Holloway, University of London and Principal Investigator of the projects *The Disaster Trade: The Hidden Footprint of UK Imports and Investment Overseas* and *Hot Trends: How the Global Garment Industry Shapes Climate Vulnerability in Cambodia*. His other books include *Going Nowhere Fast: Inequality in the Age of Translocality* (2020) and *Climate Change in the Global Workplace* (2021).

✉ @lauriefdparsons

Mummified: *The stories behind Egyptian mummies in museums*

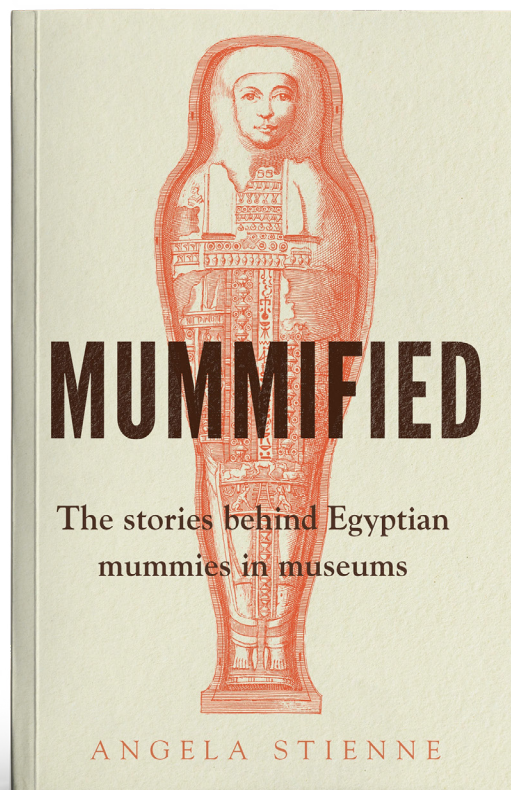
Angela Stienne

‘A compelling, captivating and complete book.’

Dario Piombino-Mascali, Research
Professor in Anthropology, Vilnius University

‘A must read’

Kara Cooney, Professor of Ancient Egyptian
Art & Architecture, UCLA



We all know what a mummy is – or do we? In *Mummified*, Angela Stienne explores the little-known stories behind the Ancient Egyptian remains displayed in British and French museums.

Taking the reader on a journey between Egypt, Paris and London, Stienne exposes a murky world of grave-robbing, theft and black-market deals over human remains. Mummies have been unrolled in public, dissected for race studies and even eaten for their supposed health-giving properties. But does the fact they are thousands of years old mean they can be treated as objects, or do we owe them the same respect we would any other human body?

Investigating matters of life and death and the ethics of collection and display, *Mummified* offers a fresh perspective on these ancient bodies, which have fascinated Europeans for centuries.

Dr Angela Stienne is a cultural historian, museum researcher and storyteller. In 2016 she created the website Mummy Stories, which aims to reshape the discussion around human remains in museums by collecting people's stories of their own encounters.

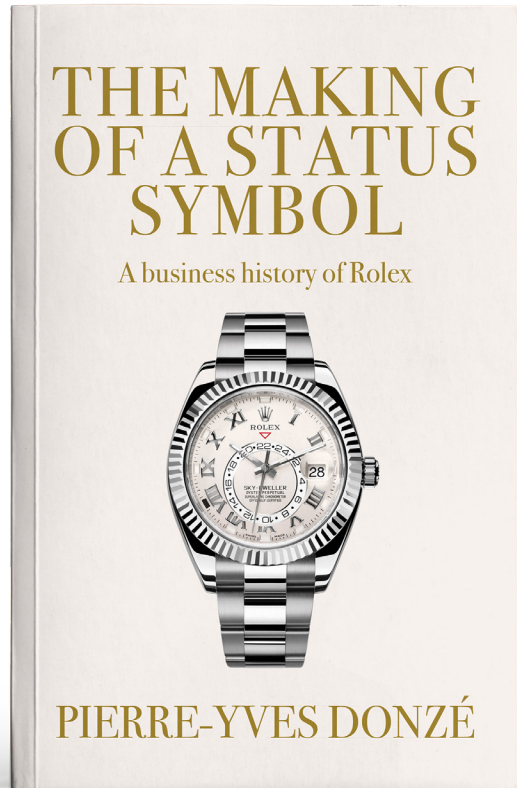
✕ @Angela_stienne

The making of a status symbol:

A business history of Rolex

Pierre-Yves Donzé

The first book to offer a deep exploration of this iconic brand.



Rolex is recognised the world over as the quintessence of Swiss watchmaking excellence. According to common understanding, this luxury brand has dominated the global watch market since the 1970s for the simple reason that it offers one of the best products.

In *The making of a status symbol*, Pierre-Yves Donzé, one of the world's leading historians of the watch industry, challenges this perception and analyses the forces behind Rolex's remarkable success. He offers for the first time a narrative explaining how a small Swiss watchmaking company succeeded, through collaboration with an American advertising agency, in turning a watch into a status symbol and making a lasting impact on the world market.

Based on deep research in Swiss, American and British archives, *The making of a status symbol* offers a new perspective on how creative industries formed in the second half of the twentieth century.

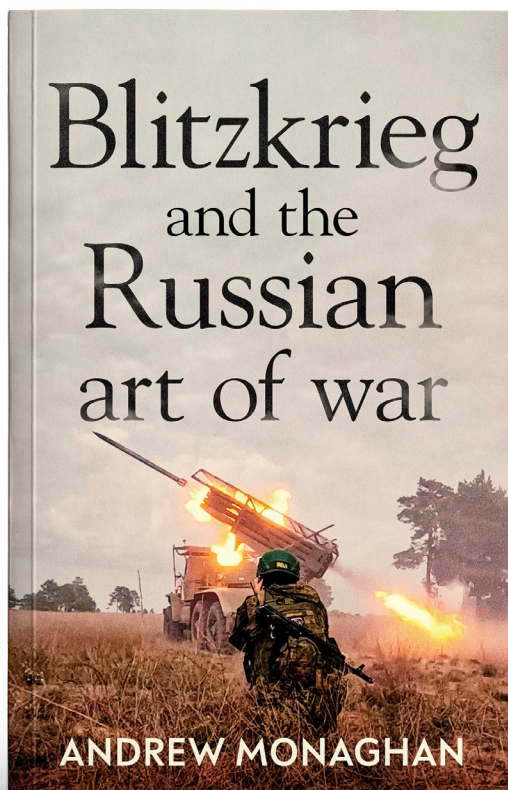
Pierre-Yves Donzé is Professor of Business History at the Graduate School of Economics, Osaka University and a visiting professor at the Department of History, University of Fribourg.

✉ @pydonze

Blitzkrieg and the Russian art of war

Andrew Monaghan

A cutting-edge investigation of how Russia makes war.



Russian strategy in the twenty-first century has been described in terms of ‘hybrid’ warfare, an approach characterised by cyberattacks and disinformation campaigns. But as the invasion of Ukraine has brutally demonstrated, conventional armed violence remains a key element of Russian power.

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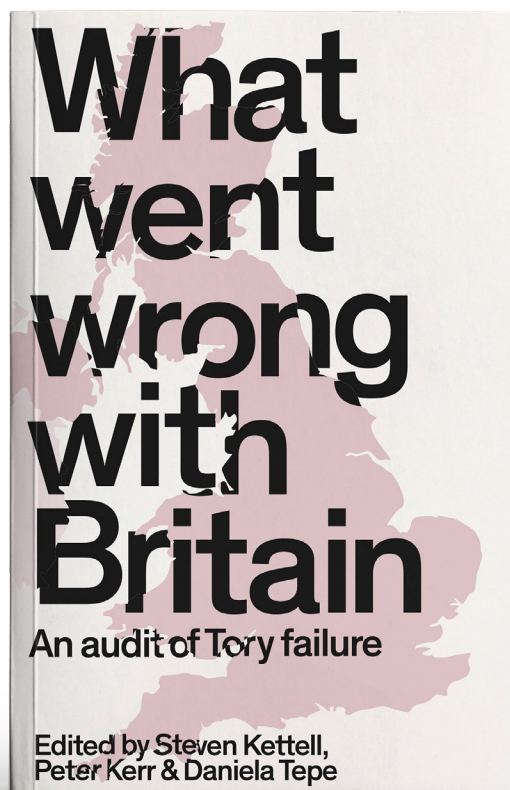
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Andrew Monaghan is Director of the Russia Research Network. He is a Global Fellow at the Wilson Center’s Kennan Institute in Washington, DC and a Senior Associate Fellow at the Royal United Services Institute in London. His previous books include *The New Politics of Russia* (2024), *The Sea in Russian Strategy* (2023) and *Dealing with the Russians* (2019).

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