

Some Tame Gazelle

In *No Fond Return of Love*, Pym introduces Dulcie Mainwaring, one of those seemingly selfless women who always help others and never look out for themselves, especially in matters of love. When Dulcie's young niece becomes the object of absentminded Professor Aylwin Forbes' amorous designs, Dulcie whisks away her friend Viola who has her own designs on the professor to the seaside in Taviscombe to discover the hidden secrets of the Forbes clan and a mysterious castle on the hill. *The Times Literary Supplement* praised Barbara Pym (1913-1980) as the most underrated writer of the century.

First Published in 1996. Routledge is an imprint of Taylor & Francis, an information company.

This concise encyclopedic reference profiles more than 800 British poets

This critical study explores late twentieth century novels by women writers—including Doris Lessing, May Sarton and Barbara Pym—that feature female protagonists over the age of sixty. These novels' discourses on aging contrast with those largely pejorative ones that dominate Western society. They break the silence that normally surrounds the lives of the aged, and this book investigates how older female protagonists are represented in relation to areas such as sexuality, dependence and everyday life.

Beginning with an investigation of popular opinions about aging and a survey of hypotheses from disciplines including gerontology, psychology and feminism, the text reviews literary critical attitudes toward fictions of aging; analyzes representations of physically dependent characters, whose anger over their failing bodies is often eased by relationships with their female friends; discusses how paradigms of female sexuality exclude the possibility of older women being sexually desirable; examines characters that live a contented life, finding a more polemical side to them than is noted in more conventional literary critiques; and analyzes the aged sleuth in classical detective fiction.

This book seeks to explore how Barbara Pym subverts the discourse of the romance novel through her use of food, clothes, heroine and hero characterizations, and marriage customs.

Roman der er stykket sammen af to efterladte manuskripter og udgivet posthumt af Hazel Holt i 1986

"One of my favorites of Pym's novels, it turns a shrewd, mocking, but always affectionate eye on English country life 30 years ago. Pym's fans will feel completely at home when they step into the Jane Austen-like lives of Harriet and Belinda Bede." - *Christian Science Monitor*

A collection featuring the complete novel "Civil to Strangers," as well as four short stories, sections of three unpublished novels, and an autobiographical essay

Three lonely people come together in this poignant and witty novel of thwarted dreams, scandalous secrets, and star-crossed romance. After being jilted by her fiancé, Dulcie Mainwaring despairs of ever finding true love. For a distraction, she goes to a publishing conference, where she meets Viola Dace, a dramatic woman who refuses to live without romance, as well as Aylwin Forbes, an editor whom Viola adores. The fact that Aylwin is married doesn't stop Viola. When her amorous pursuit prompts Aylwin's wife to leave him, the academic heartthrob is wide open to Viola's romantic attentions. That is, until Dulcie's eighteen-year-old niece moves in with Viola, and the young girl soon catches Aylwin's roving eye. Set in

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London in the early 1960s, *No Fond Return of Love* is a delightful comedy of manners that comes full circle as Dulcie discovers a love as unexpected as it is liberating. "With sheer joy I read Barbara Pym's . . . *No Fond Return of Love*." -Mary Gordon . . . comic, heartrending, brave; in short, like life itself." -Shirley Hazzard "No novelist brings more telling observation or more gentle pleasure." -Jilly Cooper "A splendid, humorous writer." -John Betjeman Barbara Pym (1913-1980) was a bestselling and award-winning English novelist. Her first book, *Some Tame Gazelle* (1950), launched her career as a writer beloved for her social comedies of class and manners. Pym is the only author to be named twice in a *Times Literary Supplement* list of "the most underrated novelists of the century." She produced thirteen novels, the last three published posthumously. Her 1977 novel *Quartet in Autumn* was shortlisted for the Booker Prize."

Miss Morrow is content in her position as spinster companion to Miss Doggett, even if her employer and the woman's social circle regard her as a piece of furniture. Stephen Latimer, the new cleric and Miss Doggett's dashing new tenant, upsets the balance for Miss Morrow by proposing the long discounted possibility of marriage.

Caroline Grimstone, the bored young wife of an ambitious anthropologist, finds a cure for her tedium in reading to the elderly and becoming a party to her husband's purloining of an important manuscript

When British writers Philip Larkin and Lord David Cecil named Barbara Pym one of the twentieth century's most underrated authors in a 1977 *Times Literary Supplement* survey, they started a Barbara Pym revival that continued unabated in Great Britain and the United States. Barbara Pym's delightful tales of jumble sales and parish meetings, her ironic insights into the relationships between women and men, have won a devoted following. Indeed she is often compared to that most accomplished author of comedies of manners, Jane Austen. The *Pleasure of Miss Pym* is a critical study of Pym as comic writer and of the links between her life and autobiographical writings and her fiction, written with a liveliness of style and tone that matches Pym's own. Not only does Charles Burkhart provide perceptive discussions of Pym's life and novels, he also illuminates the worldview represented in her work, the unique nature of her comedy, her religion, her place within the history of the novel, and her penetrating insights into male-female relationships. All of Pym's work, including the 1986 posthumous publication, *An Academic Question*, is intelligently surveyed here. Scholars of contemporary English literature will derive both instruction and pleasure from this elegantly written study, as will Pym's admiring readers, for whom it is also intended.

Dulcie Mainwaring is one of those selfless women who always helps others and never looks out for herself. When Dulcie's young niece becomes the object of absentminded Professor Forbes' affections, Dulcie whisks her friend Viola - who has her own designs on Forbes - away to the seaside village of Taviscombe to discover the secrets of the Forbes clan and a mysterious castle on the hill.

Barbara in the Bodleian: Revelations from the Pym Archives is a collection of essays by Yvonne Cocking, longtime archivist of the Barbara Pym Society and a former co-worker of Pym's, based on her years of research in the Pym archives in Oxford's Bodleian Library. It includes excerpts from Pym's diaries and notebooks plus correspondence and press clippings, and focuses on the nine novels published during Pym's lifetime – their background, development, and revision, and the reactions of friends, fans, and critics. Barbara Pym was born in Shropshire in 1913. In 1931 she entered St Hilda's College, Oxford, where she earned a degree in English Literature. After serving in the Women's Royal Naval Service during WWII she settled in London with her sister and took a job at an anthropological research institute. Her first novel, *Some Tame Gazelle*, was published in 1950, followed by *Excellent Women* in 1952, and she published four more novels between 1953 and 1961. Her seventh novel was rejected by twenty publishers who found it too old-fashioned for the 1960s, and although she

continued to write she was unable to get anything published for sixteen years. In 1977 she was named twice on the Times Literary Supplement's list of the most underrated novelists of the century, and *Quartet in Autumn* was accepted for publication and shortlisted for the Booker Prize. Her earlier books came back into print in England and were published in the U.S., and she published two more novels before her death in 1980. 'Yvonne Cocking has a unique knowledge of the wealth of material collected in the Pym archives. This, and the fact that she knew Barbara, has given her a special insight... The voice of the writer comes through, making it, refreshingly, a personal as well as a scholarly work..It is a work of enthusiasm and affection which will give information and pleasure to all Barbara's admirers.' – Hazel Holt

The Making of Barbara Pym offers new insights into Pym's formative years as a writer, during which she honed a complex view of the necessity of change on individual and cultural levels. Supported by newly published archival material, this comprehensive study of Pym's early work explores her personal and fictional pre-war and wartime writing, including unpublished and posthumously published works, before looking closely at *Some Tame Gazelle* and *Excellent Women*, published during Britain's post-war austerity period. Of central importance is a new recognition of Pym's use of social roles, particularly those of women, as proper avenues for change. The book traces how Pym came to devise characters whose individual development can be seen as analogous to or representative of larger cultural movements. Pym uses the spinster figure to embody the forward-looking cultural perspectives that she endorsed and then, finally, in *Jane and Prudence*, to figure the end of Britain's austerity period.

Set in St Basil's, an undistinguished North London parish, *An Unsuitable Attachment* is indeed full of the high comedy for which Barbara Pym is famed. There is Mark Ainger, the vicar, who introduces his sermons with remarks like "Those of you who are familiar with the church of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome. His wife Sophia with her cat, "I feel sometimes that I can't reach Faustina as I've reached other cats." Rupert Stonebird, anthropologist and eligible bachelor. The well-bred Ianthe Broome who works at the library and forms an unsuitable attachment with a young man there. The sharp-tongue Mervyn Cantrell, chief librarian, who complains that "when books have things spilt on them it is always bottled sauce or gravy of the thickest and most repellent kind rather than something utterly exquisite and delicious." There is also Daisy Pettigrew, the vet's sister, another obsessional cat person, and Sister Dew who bears a strong resemblance to Sister Blatt in *Excellent Women*.

It is surely appropriate that anthropologists, who spend their time studying life and behavior in various societies, should be studied in their turn, says Barbara Pym. In a wonderful twist on her subjects, she has written a book inspecting the behavior of

Three comedies of manners set in postwar England by the New York Times–bestselling author of *Excellent Women* and "the rarest of treasures" (Anne Tyler). Often characterized as the twentieth-century literary heiress to Jane Austen, and heralded by Phillip Larkin as "the most underrated novelist of the century," Barbara Pym explored female friendship and the quiet yearnings of British middle-class life—not the least of which, unrequited love—with sharp wit and deep compassion for her characters. No wonder Eudora Welty called her work "sheer delight" and the New York Times raved, "her entire canon is a treat." *A Glass of Blessings*: Wilmet Forsyth is bored with her everyday routine: teatimes, local gossip, even with her husband, Rodney, a civil servant who dotes on her. But Wilmet's conventional life takes a turn when she runs into the enigmatic brother of a close friend. Piers Longridge is a mystery Wilmet is determined to solve. Driven by a fantasy of romance, the sheltered, naïve Englishwoman sets out to seduce Piers—only to discover that he isn't the man she thinks he is. *Some Tame Gazelle*: Pym's debut novel invites readers to "step into the Jane Austen–like lives of Harriet and Belinda Bede," sisters who live together in a small English village (*The Christian Science Monitor*). Shy, sensible Belinda has been secretly in love with the married archdeacon of their

church for thirty years. Meanwhile Belinda's more confident younger sister, Harriet, is herself pursued by an Italian count whose proposals of marriage are always graciously declined. But it's a new arrival in their midst who has everyone talking. For now, in this poignant novel of unrequited love, that is enough. Jane and Prudence: Jane Cleveland and Prudence Bates were friends at Oxford, but now lead very different lives. Jane is married to a vicar in a proper English parish with a daughter she adores. Prudence lives in London, career-minded and fiercely independent—until Jane decides she should be married. Jane has the perfect husband in mind. What follows is a delightfully trenchant story of manners, morals, family, and female bonding that redefines the social novel for a new generation.

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Barbara Pym's sense of English social life is captured in these three novels. In *Some Tame Gazelle*, for instance, the undercurrents of a vicarage garden party are no less important than an unexpected proposal of marriage.

'an incisive and wry portrait of life in an English village in Oxfordshire.'

Two literary romantic novels from the New York Times—bestselling author of *Excellent Women*. *Less Than Angels*: In a story that explores the mating habits of humans, magazine writer Catherine Oliphant lives comfortably with anthropologist Tom Mallow—until he announces he's leaving her for a nineteen-year-old student. Though stunned by the betrayal, Catherine becomes fascinated by another anthropologist: a reclusive eccentric recently returned from Africa. Now Catherine must weigh her options and decide who she is and what she really wants. *No Fond Return of Love*: The course of true love does not run smoothly in this delightful comedy of manners set in 1960s London. Jilted by her fiancé, Dulcie Mainwaring gives up on ever finding true love. Of course, that doesn't stop her from meddling in the romantic lives of others. Her friend Viola is enamored with a handsome editor, who in turn has eyes for Dulcie's young niece. Dulcie, meanwhile, for all her struggles may be falling back into love again. *Some Tame Gazelle* Harper Perennial

"The finest introduction to Barbara Pym" (The New York Times): a hilarious comedy of manners by the shrewdly observant British novelist often compared to Jane Austen One of Barbara Pym's richest and most amusing high comedies, *Excellent Women* has at its center Mildred Lathbury, a clergyman's daughter and a mild-mannered spinster in 1950s England. She is one of those "excellent women," the smart, supportive, repressed women who men take for granted. As Mildred gets embroiled in the lives of her new neighbors—anthropologist Helena Napier and her handsome, dashing husband, Rocky, and Julian Malory, the vicar

next door—the novel presents a series of snapshots of human life as actually, and pluckily, lived in a vanishing world of manners and repressed desires.

In this study of three of Barbara Pym's novels, Naghmeh Varghaiyan, drawing on examinations of women's humour by Eileen Gillooly, Regina Barreca, and others, shows how the humorous female discourse in *Some Tame Gazelle*, *Excellent Women*, and *Jane and Prudence* undermines patriarchal culture and subverts both female and male stereotypes such as that of the spinster and of the Byronic hero. Varghaiyan reveals how the rhetoric of women's humour enables Pym's female characters to survive in the patriarchal culture and to unsettle it.

Between the amorous antique dealer Humphrey and his good-looking nephew James glides the magnificent Leonora, delicate as porcelain, cool as ice. Can she keep James in her thrall? Or will he be taken from her by a lover, like Phoebe . . . or Ned, the wicked American? 'A highly distinctive and - ultimately - charitable novel' *Financial Times* 'Faultless' *Guardian* 'Her Characters are all meticulously impaled on the delicate pins of a wit that is as scrupulous as it is deadly' *Observer* 'A coldly funny book' *Sunday Telegraph* 'Highly distinctive . . . the critics who have recently insisted on Miss Pym's too long neglected gifts have not been wrong' *Financial Times*

Reading Barbara Pym stakes out new territory in Pym criticism by questioning the assumptions and predispositions by which her novels have been received and judged. Early in Pym's career, reviews of her novels likened her books in relaxed fashion to delicious tastes and smells. Later (when mentioned twice in a TLS survey as one of the century's ten most underrated novelists secured and altered her critical reception), and since her death in 1980, commentary in oppositely vigilant fashion discovered in Pym's novels academic themes and gender/political issues ripe for exploration. But the traditional concerns of academic and popular criticism have sidestepped the more challenging task of locating the power and quality of Pym's narrative, the reasons her novels are important to read personally as well as study academically

Both middle-aged spinsters in a provincial English village, flirtatious Harriet turns down periodic proposals, while shy sister Belinda has been unable to express her longstanding love for the vicar

By closely reading the text of four of Pym's novels, *Some Tame Gazelle*, *Quartet in Autumn*, *Excellent Women*, and *Jane and Prudence*, with a unique sensitivity and respect, this book demonstrates at the level of narrative the deceptive power of Pym's art, which engages issues of loneliness and love and futility and significance and despair and joy, without the ponderousness of so much modern literature.

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human life as actually, and pluckily, lived in a vanishing world of manners and repressed desires.

Middle-aged Jane is the well-intentioned but far from perfect clergyman's wife and mother. Prudence, who at 29 is teetering at the edge of spinsterhood, is an attractive, educated working girl. The two best friends share memories of their carefree days at Oxford, leisurely lunches, and gossip, but their ultimate goal is to find a suitable mate for Prudence.

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