



Porn: An Oral History

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Polly Barton

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How do we talk about porn? Why it is that when we do talk about porn, we tend to retreat into the abstract? How do we have meaningful conversations about it with those closest to us? In *Porn: An Oral History*, Polly Barton interrogates the absence of discussion around a topic that is ubiquitous and influences our daily lives. In her search for understanding, she spent a year initiating intimate conversations with nineteen acquaintances of a range of ages, genders and sexualities about everything and anything related to porn: watching habits, emotions and feelings of guilt, embarrassment, disgust and shame, fantasy and desire. Soon, unfolding before her, was exactly the book that she had been longing to encounter – not a traditional history, but the raw, honest truth about what we aren't saying. A landmark work of oral history written in the spirit of Nell Dunn, *Porn* is a thrilling, thought-provoking, revelatory, revealing, joyfully informative and informal exploration of a subject that has always retained an element of the taboo.

"Read more": <https://fitzcarraldoeditions.com/books/porn-an-oral-history/>

'[Barton's] uncertainty is key to the success of her project, opening it up for discussion rather than narrowing around polemic. After finishing the book I found myself talking to friends about porn in a way I never had before.... Much of our contemporary economy is constructed to hook us to online platforms on which porn makes up a vast amount of content, accessible to anyone old enough to work a phone. To avoid thinking about the cultural significance of that is not just absurd, but a denial of both responsibility and reality. Barton wants to restore our ability to deal with this stuff, and the first step, as she puts it, is to talk about it.'

Sophie Elmhirst, Sunday Times 'Book of the Week'

'Barton's triumph is that she has [talked honestly about porn] and it is the most luminous thing in the book.... This book will stay with me.'

Tanya Gold, Telegraph

'Barton allows her 19 interviews to unfold with little editing or comment, painting a much more intimate picture. The chapters, one for each interviewee ... flow like a fly-on-the-wall documentary.'

Patricia Nilsson, Financial Times

Polly Barton

Polly Barton is a Japanese literary translator. Her translations include *Where the Wild Ladies Are* by Aoko Matsuda, *There's No Such Thing as an Easy Job*

by Kikuko Tsumura, and Spring Garden by Tomoka Shibasaki. She won the 2019 Fitzcarraldo Editions Essay Prize for Fifty Sounds. She lives in Bristol.