

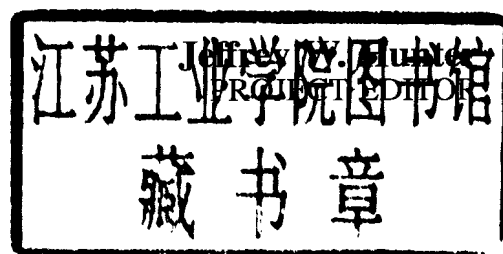
☐ Contemporary  
Literary Criticism

**CLC 238**

Volume 238

# Contemporary Literary Criticism

Criticism of the Works  
of Today's Novelists, Poets, Playwrights,  
Short Story Writers, Scriptwriters, and  
Other Creative Writers



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# Contemporary Literary Criticism

## Preface

Named “one of the twenty-five most distinguished reference titles published during the past twenty-five years” by *Reference Quarterly*, the *Contemporary Literary Criticism (CLC)* series provides readers with critical commentary and general information on more than 2,000 authors now living or who died after December 31, 1999. Volumes published from 1973 through 1999 include authors who died after December 31, 1959. Previous to the publication of the first volume of *CLC* in 1973, there was no ongoing digest monitoring scholarly and popular sources of critical opinion and explication of modern literature. *CLC*, therefore, has fulfilled an essential need, particularly since the complexity and variety of contemporary literature makes the function of criticism especially important to today’s reader.

### Scope of the Series

*CLC* provides significant passages from published criticism of works by creative writers. Since many of the authors covered in *CLC* inspire continual critical commentary, writers are often represented in more than one volume. There is, of course, no duplication of reprinted criticism.

Authors are selected for inclusion for a variety of reasons, among them the publication or dramatic production of a critically acclaimed new work, the reception of a major literary award, revival of interest in past writings, or the adaptation of a literary work to film or television.

Attention is also given to several other groups of writers—authors of considerable public interest—about whose work criticism is often difficult to locate. These include mystery and science fiction writers, literary and social critics, foreign authors, and authors who represent particular ethnic groups.

Each *CLC* volume contains individual essays and reviews taken from hundreds of book review periodicals, general magazines, scholarly journals, monographs, and books. Entries include critical evaluations spanning from the beginning of an author’s career to the most current commentary. Interviews, feature articles, and other published writings that offer insight into the author’s works are also presented. Students, teachers, librarians, and researchers will find that the general critical and biographical material in *CLC* provides them with vital information required to write a term paper, analyze a poem, or lead a book discussion group. In addition, complete bibliographical citations note the original source and all of the information necessary for a term paper footnote or bibliography.

### Organization of the Book

A *CLC* entry consists of the following elements:

- The **Author Heading** cites the name under which the author most commonly wrote, followed by birth and death dates. Also located here are any name variations under which an author wrote, including transliterated forms for authors whose native languages use nonroman alphabets. If the author wrote consistently under a pseudonym, the pseudonym will be listed in the author heading and the author’s actual name given in parenthesis on the first line of the biographical and critical information. Uncertain birth or death dates are indicated by question marks. Single-work entries are preceded by a heading that consists of the most common form of the title in English translation (if applicable) and the original date of composition.
- The **Introduction** contains background information that introduces the reader to the author, work, or topic that is the subject of the entry.
- The list of **Principal Works** is ordered chronologically by date of first publication and lists the most important works by the author. The genre and publication date of each work is given. In the case of foreign authors whose

works have been translated into English, the English-language version of the title follows in brackets. Unless otherwise indicated, dramas are dated by first performance, not first publication.

- Reprinted **Criticism** is arranged chronologically in each entry to provide a useful perspective on changes in critical evaluation over time. The critic's name and the date of composition or publication of the critical work are given at the beginning of each piece of criticism. Unsigned criticism is preceded by the title of the source in which it appeared. All titles by the author featured in the text are printed in boldface type. Footnotes are reprinted at the end of each essay or excerpt. In the case of excerpted criticism, only those footnotes that pertain to the excerpted texts are included.
- A complete **Bibliographical Citation** of the original essay or book precedes each piece of criticism. Source citations in the Literary Criticism Series follow University of Chicago Press style, as outlined in *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003).
- Critical essays are prefaced by brief **Annotations** explicating each piece.
- Whenever possible, a recent **Author Interview** accompanies each entry.
- An annotated bibliography of **Further Reading** appears at the end of each entry and suggests resources for additional study. In some cases, significant essays for which the editors could not obtain reprint rights are included here. Boxed material following the further reading list provides references to other biographical and critical sources on the author in series published by Thomson Gale.

## Indexes

A **Cumulative Author Index** lists all of the authors that appear in a wide variety of reference sources published by Thomson Gale, including *CLC*. A complete list of these sources is found facing the first page of the Author Index. The index also includes birth and death dates and cross references between pseudonyms and actual names.

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An alphabetical **Title Index** accompanies each volume of *CLC*. Listings of titles by authors covered in the given volume are followed by the author's name and the corresponding page numbers where the titles are discussed. English translations of foreign titles and variations of titles are cross-referenced to the title under which a work was originally published. Titles of novels, dramas, films, nonfiction books, and poetry, short story, or essay collections are printed in italics, while individual poems, short stories, and essays are printed in roman type within quotation marks.

In response to numerous suggestions from librarians, Thomson Gale also produces an annual cumulative title index that alphabetically lists all titles reviewed in *CLC* and is available to all customers. Additional copies of this index are available upon request. Librarians and patrons will welcome this separate index; it saves shelf space, is easy to use, and is recyclable upon receipt of the next edition.

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# Julie Burchill

## 1960-

English journalist and novelist.

The following entry provides an overview of Burchill's career through 2007.

### INTRODUCTION

Burchill has earned notoriety for her exceedingly outspoken and controversial stances on a variety of issues. Burchill began her writing career as a journalist, but quickly branched into writing novels. As a columnist, Burchill's contrarian manner has made her well-known to the British reading public. Despite, or perhaps because of, her status as a preeminent gadfly, Burchill has continued to publish essays in several of Britain's most respected publications including the *Guardian* and the *Sunday Times*.

### BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Born on July 3, 1960, to a working class family in Bristol, England, Burchill left home and moved to London at the age of 16. Burchill did not attend university. After achieving notoriety in the London underground club scene and answering an advertisement in 1976 calling for "hip young gunslingers" to cover the punk music scene, she began writing for *New Musical Express*. Burchill published an extremely popular novel in 1989, titled *Ambition*, focusing on a young journalist who seeks riches and fame. In the late 1990s, Burchill began a five-year stint writing a popular column in *The Guardian*. In a much publicized imbroglio, she left the *Guardian* in 2003 and began writing for the rival *Times* in 2004. A fierce supporter of the State of Israel and a self-described philosemite, Burchill claimed that her move was prompted in part by the *Guardian*'s anti-Semitism. Burchill's personal life has stirred nearly as much controversy as her writing career and has served as fodder for her work. After her first marriage to fellow *New Musical Express* writer Tony Parsons ended, Burchill married journalist Cosmo Landesman. In 1991, the couple, along with Toby Young, founded the short-lived magazine *Modern Review*, which promised to cover "low culture for high-brows" and featured many of Britain's best young writers. Due to her role as a publisher of the magazine,

Burchill met writer Charlotte Raven, with whom she had a very public affair. Eventually, Burchill left Raven for Raven's younger brother, Daniel. The couple married and have since published a novel together.

### MAJOR WORKS

Burchill's first work, *The Boy Looked at Johnny: The Obituary of Rock and Roll* (1978), written with Tony Parsons, offered an acerbic chronicle of punk music. The novel *Ambition* (1989) follows the exploits of Susan Street, a young newspaper writer intent on climbing her way to the top of the corporate news ladder using whatever means necessary, including sex, bribery, and blackmail. Burchill's 1992 book *Sex and Sensibility* offers a collection of her candid commentary on sexual intercourse. *No Exit*, an experimental collection published in 1993, contains short stories written in a style reminiscent of that used by Burchill in *Ambition*. *I Knew I Was Right: An Autobiography* (1998) offers readers Burchill's outsized "take no prisoners" attitude. Though ostensibly a novel, *Married Alive* (1999) is also largely autobiographical. A collection of Burchill's newspaper work, *The Guardian Columns 1998-2000* was published in 2001 and a play, *Julie Burchill Is Away*, co-written with Tim Fountain, was staged in London in 2002. In 1999 Burchill wrote an elegiac lament for Princess Diana titled *Diana*. The book railed against the British monarchy for forcing the young woman into a limited, subservient role in it; Burchill sees Diana as a transcendent figure who rose above her circumstances to capture the hearts of the British people. Burchill also published a brief biography of British soccer star David Beckham in 2001, called *On Beckham*, in which she lauded the player's talents. Burchill's 2004 young-adult novel, *Sugar Rush*, features a teenage romance with lesbian overtones. A series based on *Sugar Rush* aired on British television from 2005 to 2006. *Made in Brighton* (2007), presents the seaside city of Brighton as a microcosm of Britain and British social change.

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

Despite being one of the highest-paid columnists to have worked in Britain with massive popular appeal, Burchill has earned a much less welcoming appraisal

from critics. Many critics recognize her talent for sparking controversy, but pan her writing. Michael Bywater, for example, says of Burchill "her insights were, and remain, negligible, on the level of a toddler having a tantrum. I want. I hate. You're my bestest friend You're horrid." Deborah Ross calls Burchill's work, "tiresomely lazy and bloated and self-regarding. . . . It's full of arrogance without insight." While the novel *Ambition* resonated with British audiences and rose to the number-two position on the *Times*'s bestseller list, Burchill was admonished by reviewers who disliked the novel's erotic, salacious elements—a method that some claimed was inappropriate for a woman writer. While popular audiences seem to admire Burchill's refusal to mince words, her detailed tell-all style has also offended many others. *Times* critic Joseph Connolly notes that "all the (mostly female) reviewers of Burchill's work have either dismissed it contemptuously, or written at length about their shock, horror, and disgust."

Writing more sympathetically, in a review of *I Knew I Was Right*, John Morrish commented: "The truth is that behind all that bluster, and the verbal acidity, and the shock tactics and the self-interested desertion of husbands and children, Julie is really very sentimental." Many other reviewers have focused on Burchill's blunt language, acerbic tongue, and bellicose attitude. In his analysis of *Sex and Sensibility* critic William Leith writes, "Her prose is armed to the teeth, bulging with the weaponry of crude puns, of bodily insults." Burchill's later efforts met with similar responses, but for different reasons. Regarding *Married Alive*, James Delingpole calls the book an "ineffably tedious 191 pages," and states that, "Even at the modest £9.99 *Married Alive* must count as one of the century's great rip-offs." Not all critics have panned Burchill's work, however. Will Self asserted that "Burchill's great talent as a journalist is to beautifully articulate the inarticulate sentiments and prejudices of her readers. This is why she arouses such enormous ambivalence; and why she's so good." Chris Paling echoes Self in a review of *Made in Brighton*, calling Burchill "one of the few polemicists around who can construct both an argument and an elegant sentence."

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## PRINCIPAL WORKS

*The Boy Looked at Johnny: The Obituary of Rock and Roll* [with Tony Parsons] (nonfiction) 1978  
*Love It or Shove It* (nonfiction) 1985  
*Damaged Gods: Cults and Heroes Reappraised* (nonfiction) 1986

*Girls on Film* (nonfiction) 1986  
*Ambition* (novel) 1989  
*Prince* (screenplay) 1991  
*Sex and Sensibility* (nonfiction) 1992  
*No Exit* (short stories) 1993  
*Diana* (biography) 1998  
*I Knew I Was Right: An Autobiography* (autobiography) 1998  
*Married Alive* (novel) 1999  
*The Guardian Columns 1998-2000* (nonfiction) 2001  
*On Beckham* (nonfiction) 2001  
*Julie Burchill Is Away* [with Tim Fountain] (play) 2002  
*Sugar Rush* (novel) 2004  
*Made in Brighton* [with Daniel Raven] (novel) 2007

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## CRITICISM

**Chris Savage King (review date 14 July 1989)**

SOURCE: King, Chris Savage. "Constant Provocation." *New Statesman and Society* 2, no. 58 (14 July 1989): 42.

[In the following review, King praises Burchill's novel *Ambition*.]

Julie Burchill is disliked for numerous reasons but one remains outstanding. She's that most dangerous thing—an independent thinker—who writes about everything, thinks on her feet and gets published everywhere. For some, her column in the *Mail on Sunday* is proof of her general corruption, but such a violent iconoclast can't be discredited in such idle terms. The hackneyed format often cheapens her talent—like Barbara Stanwyck doing *Dynasty*—but even at her weakest she runs rings round most of her rivals and detractors. She is loyal to her gender, to the spirit of populism and to her emergent class. Her departure into the women's blockbuster is both anachronistic and apt.

*Ambition* touts itself as a shopping and fucking yarn. The sex is slick and funny, treading a fine line between titillation and outrage. Shopping is despatched with a few sarcastic curtsies to the most dire hallmarks of the genre: lists of designer labels trotted out with dismissive haste, a scattering of famous names and glamorous venues. The plot concerns a feisty heroine from the wrong side of the tracks making it to the top. On the way up she acquires a dreamboat with a "velvet cosh". *Ambition*'s resemblance to the blockbuster ends there.

In execution it's more a sub-genre piece: Molly Parkin with polemic, Jill Tweedie without the plaintive flannel. It includes a born-again Christian, shades of *Emmanuelle*, and hazards in health clinics recalling early Bond movies. There's a neat gloss on *Fatal Attraction*, a Shavian hero (like Undershaft), witchcraft, murder, and McInerney with a critical edge. Something here for everybody, then. Hack semioticians will be picking over it for years.

The writing is uneven. Analyses and invective that hit their mark like fireworks jive with idiotic puns, lame jokes and cloth-eared dialogue. Yet the ability to plot and write are rare enough skills anywhere, and dives into the slipshod are only the consequence of how much Burchill manages to pack in. The pace rarely falters and it metabolises like a dose of salts. Those who turn to *Ambition* as a palliative are in for a few sharp shocks.

The political issues are handled with a deft touch: sex-imperialism, ecology, and a conundrum involving a northern, working class Labour MP and a posh southern rent boy. Burchill screams and kicks against clichéd ways of thinking even while her narrative pitch is towing her towards them. As with her journalism, she offers the reader the thrill of constant provocation. Objections to her rest on the facile belief that the only worthwhile writer is the one with whom you agree.

"You can't change things unless you're in the mainstream," exclaims the heroine, halfway through the novel. She has a point. It's heartening to see a best-seller written by one of the prophets of our age—a challenging and highly enjoyable intervention in a field too long filled with sheep. Burchill can do even better than this, but this does very nicely for now.

**Jo-Ann Goodwin (review date 13 November 1992)**

SOURCE: Goodwin, Jo-Ann. "The Shock of the True." *New Statesman and Society* 5, no. 228 (13 November 1992): 33.

[In the following review, Goodwin recommends Burchill's book *Sex and Sensibility* for readers on the left side of the political spectrum.]

Jackbooted to the right; it's a phrase that might have been invented for Julie Burchill. The former Stalinist who became a Thatcher admirer ended up writing for the *Mail on Sunday*, and doing it all with a self-conscious swagger and ruthlessness that any storm-trooper could be proud of.

Her book is a collection of articles from 1988 onwards, covering just about anything from Princess Di to green politics. The pieces are held together by little more than the coherence of Burchill's worldview, which could be summed up as for-fuck's-sake-stop-whingeing-and-get-on-with-it. As Barry Norman would say, "and why not?"

Burchill likes the modern world and doesn't see why she should apologise for it. The worst years of her life were the first 16. There's not much to be said for the southwest except that it's two hours from London, and she is not slow to catch on: "The dog whimpers in its sleep: it's having a bad dream. So am I. It's called LIVING IN FUCKING BRISTOL."

Once in London, she starts to do what she's best at: saying the unsayable and getting away with it. The collection is full of one-liners designed to make your jaw drop. Skimming effortlessly on, she smashes liberal sensibilities like so many shop windows. "During my own youthful adventures into the wonderful world of S&M," she says, "I noticed that black men were much keener on being whipped and otherwise humiliated than women of any colour."

Talking about the Aids lobby: "Nothing on earth can convince one that some people are born without any concept of shame so much as seeing the self-serving, cock-sucking slags . . . of show business running around like headless chickens and preaching 'safe sex'." The best of her contempt is reserved for the "Hampstead Horrors": middle-aged, middle-brow, 1960s renegades. "'Quality of life' vs materialism indeed!—only someone who had never been poor would think it possible to have a good quality of life without a lot of money."

Julie Burchill might think Mrs Thatcher is the best thing since strawberry daiquiri, but that doesn't mean that she has nothing to say to the left. This book ought to be required reading for every bleeding-heart Labour Party member who ever whined about there not being enough women on the platform, or voted for public money to be spent on a gay-only night at the council swimming pool.

The 99 per cent of the country who don't live in NW3 recognise this as the total wank it so plainly is, and quite sensibly don't see why they should vote for it. Her outrage is the anger of tabloid readers everywhere when they find out that money, *their* money, has been spent on some loony-tune project that no one has bothered to think through properly.

Sentimentality and self-indulgence have long been the principal socialist vices, and everyone knows that too much self-indulgence makes you go blind. Instead of



immediately rallying to save the world, the whale and the British film industry, it might be best to stand back for a second and ponder such things as priorities and tactics. As she says: "It's no wonder rich people are so keen to save the planet, after all, they own most of it."

*Sex and Sensibility* has much that the left desires. It's smart, glossy, popular, and above all modern. There's no doubt that many of the pieces oversimplify, or that argument and clarity are occasionally sacrificed for the sake of a good line, but that's the price of polemic. The book is funny and clever, and it has something important to say to the British left: *get a grip*.

#### William Leith (review date 12 December 1992)

SOURCE: Leith, William. "If You're Glad I'll Be Very Frank Indeed." *Spectator* 269, no. 8579 (12 December 1992): 40-1.

[In the following review, Leith provides a brief analysis of *Investigating Sex*, edited by José Pierre, and Burchill's *Sex and Sensibility*.]

Paris, 1932. Three surrealists are talking about sex. Guy Rosey says: 'I like women with small buttocks between which the organ can be inserted as easily as into the vagina.' Yves Tanguy says: 'Sodomy isn't homosexual. It's because it's a woman that it appeals to me.' André Breton says: 'I prefer sodomy first and foremost for moral reasons, principally non-conformism.'

Sixty years ago, this group of arty weirdos did something that would be impossible today, especially among arty weirdos—they talked freely about sex, knowing that their words were being recorded. Did they really feel as free as this? It is hard to take in, hard to believe. Jean Genbach says: 'A thing which vexes me is the fact that women urinate and defecate like men.' Georges Sadoul says: 'I have a strong mental tendency towards masochism and sadism, and I don't necessarily rule them out physically.' Jean Baldenspringer says: 'Usually I would harness her, lead her into the woods, then take off the pack part of the harness with the very clear sensation of undressing someone, then indulge my little passions.' He is talking about a donkey. Man Ray says his first sexual experience was trying to penetrate a ten-year-old girl.

*Investigating Sex* goes on, at this level of frankness, for 12 sessions. Are these surrealists telling the truth, or are they making it up? Of course, you never know for sure, but these talks do tell you some things—the

extent of their tolerance, the range of their imagination. They discuss every question we, with our porn-warped sensibilities, could imagine: is it good to bugger people, to have sex with corpses, with animals, with several people at once, to masturbate into a woman's ears, to have simultaneous orgasms? Could you be sexually attracted to a woman if she is covered in shit? (To this, André Breton replies: 'I don't see any difference between the encrusted shit of the woman one loves and her eyes.')

The most vivid figure in the book, as you might expect, is Breton, who worships the ideal of heterosexual love, and who has worked out an exact position on everything, even down to flashing, which he is against, although, 'I'm not against semi-exhibitionism.' Raymond Queneau emerges as a bit of a voyeur and low-grade pervert who likes the idea of troilism and considers himself a sadist; Benjamin Peret likes sex in 'the so-called lazy position, the woman sitting upright with the man lying on his back,' but gets really excited at the idea of having sex in a church. 'While I was there,' he says, 'I would like to profane the Hosts and, if possible, leave excrement in the chalice.' Pierre Unik likes the idea of being sodomised by a giant clitoris; Peret finds the idea disgusting. The women, like Jeannette Tanguy, Nusch Eluard, and the mysterious Madame Lena, are just as raunchy as the men. As Jeanette Tanguy says: 'We are all great masturbators.'

Why is this such a good book? For a start, it's amazingly readable—you dip into it a couple of times and you find, suddenly, that it's gone, you've read the whole thing without knowing it. The best thing about the book is the contrast between these early adventurers and ourselves: they lived, unafraid, in a prudish era, when all public talk about sex was suspect; we can't talk about anything else, yet we'd be terrified to be as outspoken as this.

Julie Burchill's book *Sex and Sensibility* is a collection of essays split in half: in the first section, 'Sex', the essays are about sex, and in the second section, 'Sensibility,' the essays are also about sex, or things related to sex, or things with sexy bits in them. Burchill, one of the least wimpish sexual commentators around, is not afraid to say things like: 'Sex, on the whole, was meant to be short, nasty and brutish. If what you want is cuddling, you should buy a puppy.'

Reading Burchill, you get a heightened sense of how policed our sex lives are these days, how frightened men are of women, women of men, homosexuals of hets, hets of homos. Her prose is armed to the teeth, bulging with the weaponry of crude puns, of bodily

insults. In 'Sex Zombies' she analyses the rise of the bruised-looking female movie star; with women on the rise, she says, male movie directors—'weighed down with the useless blubber that used to pass for penis and power'—are embodying their fears by making films in which women are battered. In 'Where's the Beef?' Burchill seeks to explode the view that penis size doesn't matter: 'Why is the dildo industry built on 12-inchers?' she asks. The surrealists, of course, would have hated this kind of fighting talk. They lived before the sexual revolution, in the gentler era of foreplay; Burchill is the chronicler of its post-coital tristesse. Crude jokes, said Marcel Duhamel, are 'always detestable'. 'When women tell them,' said Pierre Unik, 'I find it absolutely intolerable.'

**Sara Maitland (review date 20 February 1993)**

SOURCE: Maitland, Sara. "Ambition Was Made of Sterner Stuff." *Spectator* 270, no. 8589 (20 February 1993): 40.

[In the following review, Maitland calls Burchill's *No Exit* a poor effort in all respects.]

When I was asked to review *No Exit* I told myself that I would like it; I would write a favourable review come hell or high water, for the good of my soul, the surprise of my readers and the chagrin of my more 'elitist' literary colleagues.

Well, I tried very hard. And I can think of one good thing to say about this book: it has a very nice clear type-face (large, too, which helps you through the painful process of reading it.) Probably if I was a post-modernist semiotician I could enjoy myself decoding Burchill's strange obsessions with the moral connotations of leather versus plastic and the use of improbable capital letters. However, as a simple reader, I have to say that this book stinks and the most interesting thing about it is to account for its undeniably certain success.

If I rigorously set aside my feminism, my distaste for covert homophobia and my literary sensibility I am left with characters without substance and a plot which is untenably flimsy in outline and preposterous in detail. To take tiny examples: it is unclear to me—and I suspect to most post-partum women, if no one else—how anyone whose 'perineum rended' during a masturbatory session with a plastic Statue of Liberty snowstorm on p. 36, can get up to the high jinks that are to follow without a great deal of gore, pain and some sort of comment from one or other of her two

lovers. At the other end of the book it is equally doubtful whether it is possible to 'cast' a pair of white plastic stilettos out the window of a train in such a way that the train then runs over them. When a British character works out on one page that 'he was a European now, for better or worse, and had no need of phoney poses', then the next page ought not to contain a sentence that reads. 'They sped away from a Europe intent on tearing itself apart, back to England.'

These minor carelessnesses are not incidental—the whole book is careless. The spy-thriller genre depends on immaculate plotting: I cannot 'give away' the storyline here because effectively there isn't one. The romantic pulp genre depends on characters with whom one can identify. I defy anyone to care about the well-being of any of the cardboard cut-outs (and badly cut out at that) who fail to people this text. The sex-and-shopping genre depends on classy expenditure, unavailable in Prague, and on mildly shocking erotic antics, presented from a woman's point of view: Burchill's sex—too generalised for real pornography—is male centred to a remarkable degree.

Now I know that Julie Burchill is not stupid (I disagree with her about a lot of things, but that does not make her stupid) and I know that *Ambition* sold lots of copies, so obviously she knows something that I don't know—about readers, novels, money or life—and I ought to respect her for that. Perhaps it is mean-minded jealousy that leads me to conclude that it is not something I want to know. Or perhaps not.

**Julie Burchill and *New Statesman and Society* (interview date 11 June 1993)**

SOURCE: Burchill, Julie, and *New Statesman and Society*. "Influences: Julie Burchill." *New Statesman and Society* 6, no. 256 (11 June 1993): 13.

[In the following interview, Burchill discusses her views on politics, art, writing, and life.]

[*New Statesman and Society*]: What books and authors have had the greatest influences on your political beliefs?

[Burchill]: *Blood of Spain* by Ronald Fraser; A J P Taylor on the second world war; and Saki, who taught me about human nature.

Name one film, one book, one poem and one song or piece of music that you would most like everyone to see, read or hear.