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Hunky Heroes, Steamy Sirens and the Ordinary People Who Bring Them to Life In POV's 'Guilty Pleasures,' Thursday, July 12, 2012 on PBS

Every Four Seconds a Romance Novel Is Sold Somewhere in the World—Three Readers, One Writer
And a Cover Model Tell Us Why

“Old fashioned, sly but sweet, Moggan’s documentary becomes far more than a film on the ins and outs of bodice-ripping fiction.”—Damien Love, *The Scotsman*

MEDIA ALERT – FACT SHEET

National Dates: **Guilty Pleasures** has its national broadcast premiere on **Thursday, July 12, 2012**, at 10 p.m. during the 25th anniversary season of the award-winning PBS series **POV (Point of View)**. (Check local listings.) Watch the full film online for free for a limited time following the premiere (July 13-Aug. 12, 2012). POV continues its broadcasts on Thursdays through Oct. 25 and concludes with fall and winter specials. American television’s longest-running independent documentary series, POV is the winner of a Special Emmy Award for Excellence in Television Documentary Filmmaking and two International Documentary Association Awards for Continuing Series.

The Film: Every four seconds a romance novel published by Harlequin or its British counterpart, Mills & Boon, is sold somewhere in the world. Julie Moggan’s **Guilty Pleasures** takes an amusing and touching look at this global phenomenon. Ironies abound in the contrasts between the everyday lives of the books’ readers and the fantasy worlds that offer them escape. **Guilty Pleasures** portrays five romance devotees who must, ultimately, find their dreams in the real world. The film was an Official Selection of the 2010 International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam.

Guilty Pleasures arrives from Britain to offer a perceptive and poignant look at the world of the romance novel by profiling: Japanese housewife Hiroko, who feels something lacking in her comfortable life with Seiich; Shumita, an Indian woman who is separated from her husband and escapes to romance books; English mother of three Shirley, who wants to spice up her marriage to Phil; prolific English Mills & Boon author Gill Sanderson, who has nailed a formula for writing romance books yet still feels a fond affection for his characters; and Stephen, the incredibly handsome American model featured on more than 200 Harlequin/Mills & Boon book covers who searches for a soulmate. Though their roles vary widely, they reveal the deeper personal and social meanings of the genre’s allure.

Guilty Pleasures discovers not so much a business as a global community of shared imagination, a community whose yearning for romance fiction’s Holy Grail—true love—seems to know no barrier of language or culture, nor show signs of abating any time soon.

Guilty Pleasures is a Bungalow Town Productions film.

Embed a trailer, download press materials and learn more at www.pbs.org/pressroom.

POV Website: POV's Webby Award-winning website offers a broad range of exclusive online content to enhance the broadcast of **Guilty Pleasures**. Download this discussion guide, lesson plans and other viewing resources, view photos from the film, and interact with the filmmaker through video interviews and an online Q&A soon after the documentary airs on POV.

Outreach: POV works with public television stations and national and community groups across the country to foster dialogue around the issues presented in our films. For a list of upcoming screening events, go to www.pbs.org/pov/outreach. POV and nationally recognized media educator Dr. Faith Rogow are developing a discussion guide with background information to help event organizers. Cari Ladd, M.Ed., is creating a lesson plan. Educators may record and show **Guilty Pleasures** in their classrooms for one year following the premiere broadcast.

Filmmaker's Statement: "After breaking up with the boyfriend I'd had since I was 17, I was left with some big questions about love," says director Moggan. "And I came across an article stating that every four seconds a romance novel published by Harlequin or its British counterpart, Mills & Boon, is sold somewhere in the world. I purchased my first romance novel, *Bedded by the Greek Billionaire*, and so began a two-and-a-half-year journey.

"Looking closely at people's deep affection for these books the world over became a way to address universal questions about the meaning of true love. Shirley and Phil, Hiroko and Seich, Shumita, Roger and Stephen stood out to me as warm, honest and hugely likeable individuals, all yearning for something more in their lives."

Filmmaker

Bio: [Julie Moggan \(Director\)](#)
Guilty Pleasures is Julie Moggan's first feature-length documentary. She has a background in social anthropology and studied documentary at the United Kingdom's National Film and Television School, where her graduation film, *Waiting for a Lift*, won the Becks Futures Student Prize. Since then Moggan has directed and worked as a camera operator on a number of documentaries for the BBC and Channel 4.

Related Stories: "(At Least) Fifty Shades of Erotic" by Katie Arnold-Ratliff, *Time*, June 28, 2012.
<http://entertainment.time.com/2012/07/02/books-to-read-this-summer/#at-least-fifty-shades-of-erotica>

"Romance Novels Are Steaming Up E-Reader Screens" by Irin Carmon, *Fast Company*, June 22, 2011.
www.fastcompany.com/magazine/157/angela-james-harlequin-ebook

"How Romance Novels Empower Women" by Maria Rodale, *The Huffington Post*, March 2, 2012.
www.huffingtonpost.com/maria-rodale/how-romance-novels-empowe_b_1315986.html

Credits:	Director:	Julie Moggan
	Producer:	Rachel Wexler
	Co-producers:	Neil Herbert, Clairmonte Bourne
	Cinematographer:	Julie Moggan
	Editor:	Claire Ferguson
	Original Music:	Stuart Earl

Running Time: 56:46

POV Series Credits:

Executive Producer: Simon Kilmurry
Co-Executive Producer: Cynthia López
Vice President, Programming and Production: Chris White
Series Producer: Yance Ford
Coordinating Producer: Andrew Catauro

Awards and Festivals:

Special Jury Award, Mendocino Film Festival 2011
Best Documentary Feature Award, Sidewalk Moving Picture Festival 2011
Jury Prize, Nantes British Film Festival 2011
Nominee, Most Entertaining Documentary, Grierson Awards 2011
Official Selection, New British Cinema, BFI London Film Festival 2010
Official Selection, International Documentary Festival Amsterdam 2010
Opening Night Film, Full Frame Documentary Film Festival 2011
Official Selection, Göteborg International Film Festival 2011
Official Selection, DocVille 2011
Official Selection, New Zealand International Film Festival 2011

Pressroom: Visit POV's pressroom, www.pbs.org/pov/pressroom, for press releases, downloadable art, filmmaker biographies, transcripts and special features.

POV: Produced by American Documentary, Inc. and celebrating its 25th season on PBS in 2012, the award-winning POV is the longest-running showcase on American television to feature the work of today's best independent documentary filmmakers. POV has brought more than 325 acclaimed documentaries to millions nationwide and has a Webby Award-winning online series, *POV's Borders*. Since 1988, POV has pioneered the art of presentation and outreach using independent nonfiction media to build new communities in conversation about today's most pressing social issues. Visit www.pbs.org/pov.

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