

Biography Workshop

Helen Trinca

Did Ted St John have an affair – and does it matter?

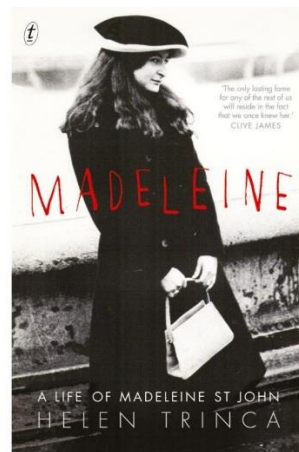
Date: Thursday 29 October 2015

Venue: Seminar Room A, Coombs Building

Time: 12 midday to 1.30 p.m.

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Biographers regularly come across material that is sometimes uncomfortable; sometimes difficult to prove - and not necessarily central to their subject. That's when they must decide whether to publish and be damned or excise the information from their drafts. Helen Trinca, whose biography of Ted's daughter, Madeleine St John, was the co-winner of the Prime Minister's non-fiction award last December, will discuss the ethics of writing the lives of others. Ted St John was a well-known Liberal politician in the 1960s; his daughter an impoverished expatriate writer who was short-listed for the Booker Prize. Their relationship was often fraught, but should Ted's personal life as an adult be included in an account of his daughter's life?



Helen Trinca was born and raised in Perth and initially worked as a journalist for *the West Australian*. Since then, she has worked mainly for *The Australian*, as well as undertaking brief stints with the ABC, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, and even at one point with the ANU Reporter. She is currently Managing Editor of *The Australian*.

In addition to *Madeleine: A Life of Madeleine St John* (Text Publishing 2013), Helen has co-authored two books: *Waterfront: The battle that changed Australia* (2000), AND *Better than sex: How a whole generation got hooked on work* (2004).