Anna Ford joins the long line of former friends and journalists who have publicly fallen out with the "narcissistic and attention-seeking" novelist

By Susie Mesure

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He is renowned as a misogynist. Now a woman has turned the tables on the author Martin Amis. His latest adversary is Anna Ford, the former newsreader who has known him for more than three decades, who yesterday joined the novelist's ever-lengthening list of foes, branding him a narcissist lacking in empathy.

Ford, who champions women in the City from her seat on J Sainsbury's board of directors, attacked Amis's "narcissism", an "inability to empathise" and an unwillingness to look "closely and honestly at himself" when it came to his relationships. Her stinging attack is among the most personal the author has received to date. It joins accusations of racism and sexism that have been levelled at him over the years.

One of Britain's best-known writers, Amis is rarely out of the headlines, not least when he has a book to promote. His latest, The Pregnant Godfather, was published earlier this month. Articles claiming that Amis has called for "euthanasia booths on street corners" and stated that "women have too much power for the harmony of their own lives" have been among the acres of newsprint devoted to the writer during the past few weeks.

For his part, Amis used a newspaper column last week to hit back, arguing that the press has misrepresented him. Rather than being "controversial on purpose" and "stirring up the press" whenever he has a date. It joins accusations of racism and sexism that have been levelled at him over the years.

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The Booker prize winner, below, berated Amis for "male turkey-cocking" after he dumped his agent in the quest for more money. Byatt said: "I don’t see why I should subsidise his greed, simply because he has a divorce to pay for and has just had all his teeth redone."

**Maggie Gee**

Along with Helen McNeil, the writer stood between Amis and the Booker shortlist back in 1989. Gee persuaded the other judges to keep London Fields, one of the author’s best works, off the shortlist because they were offended by the character Nicola Six, a vampish, sexually reckless young woman who organises her own murder.

**Pat Kavanagh**

Despite being Amis’s literary agent for 22 years, Kavanagh, right, was dumped in the quest for a bigger advance in the early 1990s. Adding to the angst, Kavanagh was married to Amis’s long-term friend Julian Barnes. Not surprisingly, the pair fell out spectacularly.

**Antonia Phillips**

There’s splitting up with your wife and then there’s splitting up with your wife for her best friend. That was what Amis did when he walked out on his first wife, the American philosopher Phillips, for her best friend and fellow American, Isabel Fonseca, a writer and heiress.

**Julie Kavanagh**

Not content with falling out with one sister, Amis managed to fall out with Pat’s half-sister after the pair became lovers. Once again, the relationship failed because Amis cheated on her with her best friend, Emma Soames.

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