

Derby City Libraries

Word & Vision March 2010

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This month we celebrate Science and find out more about contemporary British thriller writers and the unmistakable smell of old books. Be sure to get your competition entries in quick, with two great giveaways on offer. Congratulations to Greg Holland, winner of February's book giveaway.

Please pass this newsletter onto friends and family who may wish to subscribe. Contact details can be found at the bottom of the page

1. News

Scientists analyse the smell of books

A team of chemists have analysed the chemicals which combine to form "old book smell", they believe that one day their "sniff test" could help staff in museums and historic libraries to preserve paper artefacts. Matija Strlic of University College London described the smell to the Daily Telegraph as: "A combination of grassy notes with a tang of acids and a hint of vanilla over an underlying mustiness, this unmistakable smell is as much a part of the book as its contents."

Science and Engineering Week at Derby City Libraries

12 – 21 March

Come and experiment - there is something for everyone.

Hands-on science, an interactive forensic crime scene, find out how crime author Stephen Booth researches his novels, have a go in a flight simulator and much, much more happening at a library near you.

Talks for those interested in science.

Hands on fun experiments for all the family.

Careers advice for those considering a job in science and engineering and of course, lots of science and engineering books and web sites.

Pick up a leaflet from your library or take a look at www.derby.gov.uk/libraries

For information on library events ask in your local Derby City Library or check

our events listing at www.derby.gov.uk/libraries

2. New Fiction out this Month



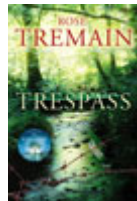
The Silent Sea- Clive Cussler

On 7 December 1941, four brothers exploring a pit on a small island off the coast of Washington state make an extraordinary discovery, only to be interrupted by news of Pearl Harbour.



Big Girl- Danielle Steel

Danielle Steel celebrates the virtues of sisterhood and unconventional beauty with a tale of two sisters.



Trespass- Rose Tremain

Set among the hills and gorges of the Cevennes, the dark and beautiful heartland of southern France, 'Trespass' is a novel about disputed territory, sibling love and devastating revenge.

Also out this month:

Katie Flynn- Heading Home

Nicci French- Complicit

Robin Hobb- Dragon Haven

Hanif Kureishi- Collected Stories

Ian McEwan- Solar

Alexander McCall Smith- The Double Comfort Safari Club

Lionel Shriver- So Much for That

To check availability or place a hold on a copy of any of these titles visit your local Derby City Library or use our stock catalogue at www.derby.gov.uk/libraries.

Remember, holds are now free!

3. New Non-Fiction out this Month



Lost and Found- Lynda Bellingham

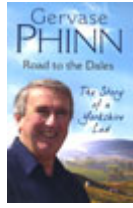
A memoir of Lynda's 40 year career and personal life, pegged as an inspiring story of heartache and determination.



Dave Eggers- Zeitoun

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans residents Kathy & Abdulrahman are cast into unthinkable struggle with forces beyond wind & water. Abdulrahman has stayed on in the city, traversing its deeply flooded streets by canoe, feeding trapped dogs & rescuing survivors. But nothing could prepare him for the nightmare that followed.

COMPETITION- We have a proof copy of Zeitoun to give away courtesy of publisher Hamish Hamilton. To be in with a chance of winning simply email your name, library card number and contact details to marie.timbrell@derby.gov.uk with "Zeitoun" in the subject box by midnight on 31 March. Open to all library members except library staff, the lucky winner will be contacted in early April.



Gervase Phinn- Road to the Dales

A memoir of the Phinn's 1950s Yorkshire childhood with uproarious tales of bicycle accidents, first dates and family trips to Blackpool. Grand.

Also out this month:

Richard Brodie- Getting Past OK: The Self-Help Book for People Who Don't Need Help

Simon King- Shetland Diaries

Pauline Prescott- Smile Though Your Heart is Breaking

John Simpson- Unreliable Sources: How the Twentieth Century Was Reported

Alistair Urquhart- The Forgotten Highlander: My Story of Survival During the War in the Far East

To check availability or place a hold on a copy of any of these titles visit your local Derby City Library or use our stock catalogue at www.derby.gov.uk/libraries

Remember holds are now free!

4. Books on a theme – Science

In celebration of Science & Engineering Week, here's our pick of science titles :

1. Bad Science- Ben Goldacre

Writer, broadcaster and medical doctor Ben Goldacre dismantles the dodgy science behind some of the great drug trials, court cases and missed opportunities of our time.

2. The Age of Wonder- Richard Holmes

Holmes proposes a radical vision of science before Darwin, exploring the earliest ideas of deep time and deep space, the creative rivalry with the French scientific establishment, and the startling impact of discovery on great writers and poets such as Mary Shelley, Coleridge, Byron and Keats.

3. Quantum: Einstein, Bohr and the Great Debate about the Nature of

Reality- Manjit Kumar

A dramatic and superbly-written history of this fundamental scientific revolution, and the divisive debate at its core. Quantum theory looks at the very building blocks of our world, the particles and processes without which it could not exist.

4. Science: A Four Thousand Year History- Patricia Fara

Patricia Fara shows how science has always belonged to the practical world of war, politics, and business. She tells true stories about real people - men and women who needed to earn their living, who made mistakes, and who trampled down their rivals in their quest for success.

5. Finding Moonshine: A Mathematician's Journey Through Symmetry- Marcus Du Sautoy

A compelling tour of the development of ideas about symmetry and personal insight into how mathematician work and think.

5. What are you reading this month?

This month's selection comes from Kirby Meehan who works at Derby Central Library:

***The Road* by Cormac McCarthy**

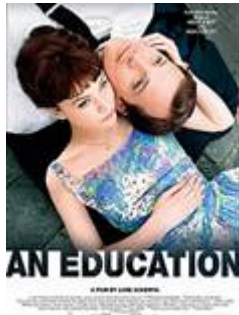
In a harsh post apocalyptic world a man and his son follow the road, walking through their life to an unknown fate. Always hiding, always cold; never knowing where their next meal will come from but always having each other. McCarthy has the rare ability to write of something dark and horrible with such rich, creamy language that you want to take your time and savour it:

“The frailty of everything revealed at last. Old and troubling issues resolved into nothingness and night. The last instance of a thing takes the class with it. Turns out the light and is gone. Look around you. Ever is a long time.”

One of the most stunning and beautiful books I've read in a long time.

6. DVD of the Month

An Education (12): Release date 8.3.10



A suburban London teenager finds her traditional education replaced by something slightly more sinister when an older, more worldly suitor sweeps her off her feet while placing her future in jeopardy.

London, 1961: 16-year-old Jenny (BAFTA winner, Carey Mulligan) is smart, attractive and eager to start her adult life. She's grown tired of the familiar adolescent routine, so when urbane newcomer David (Peter Sarsgaard) appears in town, Jenny senses a rare opportunity to shake things up a bit. Quickly falling under David's spell, the impressionable Jenny begins accompanying her newfound beau to classical concerts, art auctions, crowded pubs and dinners that stretch into the small hours of the night. But Jenny is brighter than most kids her age, and her parents always dreamt of getting their exceptional daughter into Oxford. These days it seems like she's headed in a different direction -- will David ultimately be her undoing, or the person who helps her finally realize her true potential?

If you enjoy *An Education*, the screenplay was written by best selling author, Nick Hornby whose books, such as *High Fidelity* and *About a Boy*, are also available from Derby City Libraries.

Other films to borrow from your library this March include *2012*, *Law Abiding Citizen*, *Fantastic Mr Fox* and *Harry Brown*.

7. Authors of the Month – Matt Lynn, Zoe Sharp & Richard Jay Parker

This month we spoke to three British thriller writers from the Curzon Group, group of writers committed to promoting the great British thriller, about their writing, reading and what they can't live without. They will be speaking at Allestree Library on Friday 19 March, 7pm, call 01332 559761 for details.

Q. Why thrillers?

Zoe- They're what I always loved to read. I'm drawn much more towards the thriller side of the crime genre in my reading, so that's what I enjoy writing. Initially, I thought it was because I just wasn't very good at the intricate and twisted Agatha Christie-type mystery, and thrillers tend to be more linear in nature. As I've gone on, however, I've found that my plots are tending to

become more interwoven, so I'm trying to go for both pace and complexity. Sometimes I'm amazed I have any hair left at all...

Matt- There is a tradition of British thriller writing that I really admire. It stretches back to writers such as John Buchan and Eric Ambler, and was carried on by authors such as Ian Fleming, Alistair MacLean and Len Deighton. So I wanted to try to find a way of drawing on that heritage of exciting adventure stories, but to put them in a setting that was completely contemporary and modern.

Richard- The term 'thriller' is such a huge umbrella for a large body of entertaining and varied novels. But you can always be sure that a good thriller will keep you turning the pages long into the night. It's a great aspiration for any writer and when someone tells me they couldn't put 'Stop Me' down I can't think of a better compliment.

Q. Do you enjoy the research part of your writing? You must have met some interesting characters...

Zoe- Oh, I'll say, like the arms dealers, and the mercenaries, and the guy who used to go around protecting the Israeli ambassador with an Uzi on a shoulder strap under his coat. It's a brilliant excuse to drive at 170+mph across Germany, rummage all over the engine room of a cross-channel ferry looking for ways to disable it, shoot all kinds of cool stuff, and watch body armour being test-fired. I love the technical side of research, but I do appreciate that I then have to leave about 90% of it out. I'm writing a creative story, not a textbook, and while I'd love people to be able to pick up interesting snippets from my work, I'm not trying to lecture to anyone.

Richard- My stories are about unusual events impacting the lives of ordinary people. 'Stop Me' begins with such an event and then draws the character deeper into territory he normally wouldn't have been exposed to. Since visiting over a decade ago, I always thought that New Orleans was a great backdrop for a story – the cemeteries, the French Quarter, the swamps. It's been used before so I wanted to find a side of it that hadn't been covered. The aftermath of Mardi Gras I remember distinctly. It's like the whole city had a hangover and I thought that was an ideal scenario for my character. He's living in a zombie-like state after the disappearance of his wife.

Matt- The research is one of the most interesting parts of putting together a book. I write military stories, so I work hard at getting the setting right, the geography, and of course all the weapons and equipment. If I'm describing a weapon in a book, then I want to know how it works, and where possible I'll always try and find someone who has used it in combat so I can get a feel for what it is really like. I did quite a bit of ghost-writing before starting my own series of books, mainly for military figures. So I ghosted for SAS soldiers, and Mossad assassins, among others. That bought me into contact with a whole world that might otherwise be closed to outsiders, and allowed me to collect a lot of useful information for my own books.

Q. Do you find writing an enjoyable process, how did it feel when you found out you had your first book deal?

Matt- You have to enjoy writing to make a living at it. If you're not having fun with the story, it's hard to see how anyone else is going to. That said, it's hard work as well. A book is a long project, and it involves a huge amount of work.

You have to be dedicated, and keep working away at it every day, otherwise it won't get finished. But it's fantastic when you finally see the finished book in the libraries and bookshops. And even better when you see someone reading it on the train.

Zoe- Over the moon! Sometimes I still can't quite believe it, and I'm just working on book nine at the moment. It never gets any easier, that's for sure. I think I enjoy 'having written' almost more than the actual writing process. It's satisfying to look back at a completed chapter, or novel, to the point where you forget what a struggle it was sometimes to get there. I tend to find that I have to set myself a word target, just to keep the momentum going. I usually do this by trying to write so many words a month, rather than having a daily target. That way, if I'm away, or have a really bad day and achieve nothing, I haven't totally blown it. I just adjust the target for the rest of the month and keep going. Persistence is everything.

Richard- I enjoy the early thinking stages –plotting everything in my head - but sometimes filling the blank pages is a daunting prospect. It's always hugely satisfying when you finish your first draft though. I love having the clay to play with, improve upon and edit. Obviously getting a publishing deal for 'Stop Me' was a vindication of all the years of slogging and rejection. It's great to have feedback from my friends at last – I never let them read any of my work until now.

Q. Have you read anything lately that you would recommend to our readers?

Matt- I've been going back to a lot of old thrillers and war stories because I find the skill of the writing really inspiring. So, for example, I've been reading writers such as Helen McInnes and Len Deighton and Hammond Innes recently. They were big in the 1950s and 1960s, but aren't so well-known these days. But there is a lot you can learn from them. I'd also recommend the books of Sven Hassel, a really fine military writer. I read his books as a kid, but re-reading them I think they have really stood the test of time.

Richard- Have been catching up with the books of my fellow panel writers. I enjoyed the fast-paced, explosive action in Matt Lynn's 'Death Force' as well as the breakneck thrills of Zoe Sharp's 'Third Strike.'

Zoe- I've just snuck an advance copy of Lee Child's latest, '61 Hours', which is another great story in the Jack Reacher series. I love all the late Robert B Parker's books for his sparse prose and wonderful dialogue. At the moment I'm just reading JT Ellison's 'The Cold Room', and Stuart MacBride's 'Blind Eye' - both two of my favourite people.

Q. What are the three things, as a writer, which you couldn't live without?

Richard- My brain, my fingers and the dose of insanity needed to pursue publication.

Zoe- Health, luck and happiness. Anyone with determination can be a writer. You don't need anything beyond a supply of paper and pencils. If you have a story to tell, tell it.

Matt- A computer, coffee and a CD player.

Q. What are you working on at the moment?

Zoe- I'm working on the next book in the Charlotte 'Charlie' Fox series, about my ex-army turned bodyguard heroine. In this one, she's trying to prevent the kidnap and murder of a girl on Long Island, New York. And I have a couple of short stories to write, but they're taking a back seat as the deadline for the book looms!

Matt- The 'Death Force' books are a series, with one scheduled every year. I'm just finishing off the third in the series, 'Shadow Force', which is set amongst the pirates in Somalia. And after that, I'll start work on the next book, which has the working title 'Ice Force'.

Richard- My second thriller is with my publisher at the moment and I've already started on thriller 3. I've put a title forward for book 2 but it's not definite yet. I still haven't decided on one for book 3. I'd like to come up with an imperative, attention grabbing title as readers have told me 'Stop Me' shouted at them from the shelf.

To find out more about the Curzon group check out their website at <http://www.thecurzongroup.com/home.aspx> where you will find links to the writers own individual websites.

COMPETITION- Matt and Zoe are very kindly offering a signed copy of their latest book to one lucky reader. Simply email your name, library card number and contact details to marie.timbrell@derby.gov.uk with 'British Thrillers' in the subject box by midnight on 31 March. All library members can enter with the exception of library staff. The winner will notified in early April.

8. Quotes of the Month

"To sit alone in the lamplight with a book spread out before you, and hold intimate converse with men of unseen generations - such is a pleasure beyond compare." Kenko Yoshida

"Let books be your dining table
And you shall be full of delights
Let them be your mattress
And you shall sleep restful nights."
Author Unknown

9. Upcoming Events

Below is just a sample of the events in Derby City Libraries this month, to see the full listing go to www.derby.gov.uk/libraries

Join us to celebrate National Science and Engineering Week 2010 - 12 to 21 March

Come and experiment - there is something for everyone.

Read the programmes for details of all the events.

[Daytime events](#)  (98KB)

[Evening events](#)  (74KB)

Every Thursday in March 2.30 pm: Knit and natter

Knit and natter meets weekly. Bring your knitting, crochet, sewing, embroidery, tatting or whatever you are working on. Free tea and coffee is provided and a staff member is available to offer what help they can. There will be a wide selection of books available for library members to borrow.

Venue: Central Library

Cost: Free

For more information call the Central Library on 01332 641702.

Wednesday 3 March 2pm to 3pm: Chaddesden Library Book Club

An opportunity to discover new authors, try new types of reading and talk about books with other like minded people.

Venue: Meets at the library at 2pm and then goes to the Church Pavilion for the meeting

Cost: Free

For more information call Chaddesden Library on 01332 672352

Monday 15 March 7pm to 9pm: The Science of superheroes: Have you ever wondered if you could fly like Superman?

Is it realistic that modern science can copy the powers we see in comic books and films in real humans?

Can we make humans fire web like Spiderman?

Can we make people have super strength like the Incredible Hulk?

Can we make people regenerate like Wolverine?

This event is recommended for children aged 10 and over.

Talk by Dr Ian Turner from the University of Derby

Venue: Sinfin Library

Cost: Free

For more information call Sinfin Library on 01332 711302

Wednesday 17 March: Springwood Library Book Club.

An opportunity to discover new authors, try new types of reading and talk about books with other like minded people.

Venue: Springwood Library

Cost: Free

For more information call the Springwood Library on 01332 669123.

Wednesday 17 March 7pm to 9pm: Where the bodies are buried



A talk by Stephen Booth, one of Britain's leading crime writers. Stephen will discuss his characters, research and the writing process followed by a question and answer session.

Venue: Central Library

Cost: Free, booking essential

Book at any City Library or call Central Library on 01332 641702 for more information

Thursday 18 March 2pm to 4pm: Knit and Natter

Bring your knitting, crochet ,embroidery, needlework or any other project you have on the go

Venue: Mickleover library

Cost : Free

For more information call Mickleover library on 01332 718926

Thursday 18 March 7pm to 8pm: The history of crime

Talk by Jon Wright from the University of Derby - Forensic science in a fundamental part of the modern judicial system. This talk explores the developments and changes in forensic science in recent history.

Venue: Local Studies Library

Cost: Free

For more information call the Local Studies Library on 01332 255393

Friday 19th March 10am to 4pm: Lab in a Lorry

Hands-on-science event for young people and adults - Lab in a Lorry is a mobile lab that gives you the chance to explore science through hands-on experiments.

Venue: Sinfin Library

Cost: Free

For more information call Sinfin Library on 01332 711302

Friday 19 March 7pm to 9pm: The Tradition of British Thriller Writing

A panel of thriller writers Matt Lynn, Richard Jay Parker and Zoe Sharp will discuss the return of the great British thriller.

Venue: Allestree Library

Cost: Free, booking essential

Book at any City Library or call Allestree Library on 01332 559761 for more information.

Wednesday 31 March 2pm: Urdu Library Book Club

An opportunity for Urdu readers to discover new authors, try new types of reading and talk about books with other like minded people.

Venue: Peartree Library

Cost: Free

For more information call Mohammed Ahson Khan at Blagreaves Library on 01332 255412

Events Coming Soon- Stephen Booth at Mackworth Library on 21 April and RJ Ellory at Allestree Library on 19 May.

Contact Us

We welcome your feedback. If you would like to submit a book review or give feedback about this newsletter or to subscribe/unsubscribe please email marie.timbrell@derby.gov.uk and put Newsletter in the subject box.

www.derby.gov.uk/libraries