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**Newsletter No 85
August 2010**

“This is an important book, the critic assumes, because it deals with war. This is an insignificant book because it deals with the feelings of women in a drawing-room.”
Virginia Woolf

We invite you to enter the drawing-room of Margaret Mayfield in PRIVATE LIFE our [Book of the Month](#) by Jane Smiley. See the [competition](#) page to win a copy and read our [interview](#) with the author.

The other [recommended titles](#) this month are the unsettling SKIN LANE by Neil Bartlett, TRAVELLING LIGHT, a brilliant short story collection by Tove Jansson and THE CONFESSION OF CATHERINE HOWARD by Suzannah Dunn.

Do you agree with our reviews? Would you like to have your say? Leave your comments at the bottom of any review - we'd love to hear them.

Can you [Spot the Bookshop](#)? Congratulations to Terri Bransbury the winner of July's competition for spotting the Daunts Bookshop, Marylebone, London. A £10 book token is on its way.

Congratulations to all of our competition winners. The 10 winners of OUT OF OFFICE by Mark Piggott are: Debbie Carpenter, Sandhurst; Barbara Farrant, Devizes; Paul Hanley, Whiston; Steve Marler, Hampton; Lynne Huffam, Radlett; Phil Murden, Billericay; Clare Hallas, Streatham; Lewis Pettit, Ipswich; Doreen Plumridge, Colchester and Eve Kemp-Gee, Carmarthen. Many thanks to Legend Press, the publishers.

The 5 winners of 500 ESSENTIAL CULT BOOKS are Chris Ryan, West Kirby; Jonet Bown, Harrogate; Mel Sims, Edingley; June Newton, Riding Mill and Michael O'Sullivan, London. Many thanks to Ilex, the publishers.

And the 2 winners of the Booksellers Association prize are Carolyn Hopper and Madelaine Key.

Welcome to all the new groups who have recently registered with us. Now is the time to request your **FREE BOOKS!** Just go to the [offers](#) page. This is for **ALL** registered groups (sorry, UK and Ireland groups only) not just new ones. If your group is not registered then just fill in the [form](#). It's a very simple process. **N.B.** You only need to register once. Does your bookgroup info need updating? Email us at info@bookgroup.info and we'll amend your directory entry for you.

Read about our [Bookgroup of the Month](#) the lively 10 year old St Margarets Bookclub. Fill in the [questionnaire](#) if you'd like to be a BGoTM and win a £10 book token if you're chosen.

The fourth [Henley Literary Festival](#), takes place from September 29th to October 3rd. Appearances from Melvyn Bragg, Antonia Fraser and Craig Brown are among the 100 events held throughout the town at a range of venues including the Kenton Theatre and the River and Rowing Museum. Everyone is catered for, ranging from events for youngsters in the Children's Festival and workshops aimed at would-be writers. The hugely popular River Readings return with Love Letters and War Poetry featuring as themes on the boats that cruise down the Thames.

Get your tickets for [The Hampstead and Highgate Literary Festival](#), 2010 which will take place between 19th and 21st of September.

According to Gabriel Josipovici, the former Weidenfeld professor of comparative literature at Oxford University, leading contemporary British authors such as Salman Rushdie, Ian McEwan and Julian Barnes are unworthy of the accolades they receive. He said they were like "prep-school boys showing off" and virtually indistinguishable from one another in scope and ambition. Read [more](#)

Perhaps McEwan et al should try the massively popular [I Write Like](#) website and find out just how indistinguishable they are from one another!

See the 2010 [Man Booker longlist](#) (where none of the "prep-school boys showing off" can be found).

The closing date for this year's Prose and Poetry Prizes 2010 from The New Writer magazine is 30 November. Established in 1997 it is one of the major annual international competitions for short stories, novellas, single poems, poetry collections, essays and articles which offers cash prizes as well as publication for the prize-winning writers in The Collection, a special edition of The New Writer magazine. Further information including guidelines and entry fees can be found at: <http://www.thenewwriter.com/prizes.htm>

The guest on [Radio 4 Bookclub](#) in August is Siri Hustvedt talking about her novel WHAT I LOVED, part love story, thriller, and part family saga. That's on Sunday 1st at 4pm and Thursday 5th also at 4pm and on podcast and the i-player too.

Kamila Shamsie is on the BBC World Book Club on Thursday, 30th September, and will be talking about her international bestseller BURNT SHADOWS (see our review). If you would like to attend or put a question

to Kamila Shamsie then email worldbookclub@bbc.co.uk

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