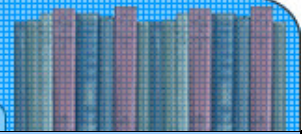


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This Just In...

Thursday, July 15, 2004

New York Times to serialize novels

Borrowing a tradition from the great newspapers of the past, the New York Times will serialize *The Great Gatsby*, *Like Water for Chocolate*, *Breakfast at Tiffany's* and *The Color of Water* this summer. It's not a purely altruistic move. The sponsors for the serializations are a group of BMW dealers. The great paper expects to turn a profit on the project, which will also feature public readings by celebrities and other events.

Of note ...

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[Justice League of America: Superman: Never Ending Battle - Book Review...](#)

The Trades Thu May 26 2005 23:42:33 GMT-0400

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The New York Times reports...

[A Rich Boy's Poor Childhood...](#)

The New York Times

Thu May 26 2005

20:00:25 GMT-0400

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Time)

[Absolution for Couch Potatoes and Gamers...](#)

The New York Times

Wed May 25 2005

19:06:48 GMT-0400

(Eastern Standard

Time)

[University Presses Challenge Google...](#)

The New York Times

Wed May 25 2005

01:34:44 GMT-0400

(Eastern Standard

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['Oh the Glory of It All': Poor Little Rich Boy...](#)

The New York Times

Tue May 24 2005

18:48:10 GMT-0400

(Eastern Standard

Time)

[A Year Tracing Nascar's Skid Marks...](#)

The New York Times

Tue May 24 2005

18:48:04 GMT-0400

(Eastern Standard

Time)

Wednesday, July 7, 2004

The next Harry Potter installment is called. . .

Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince will no doubt become yet another publishing sensation. We'll see if it can top previous Potter debuts. J.K. Rowling can't seem to lose. Scholastic has confirmed the title of the sixth book in the series, but it remains unclear when it will be released. The title has been the subject of much gossip. One theory held that the title would be *Harry Potter and the Pillar of Storge*, which Rowling dismissed. The Associated Press reports that the paperback version of *Harry Potter and the Order of the Pheonix* will be released August 10.

Tuesday, June 29, 2004

Overdue library book? Better watch out

If you're harboring an overdue book, watch out for the book police! Libraries are basically fed up with the mounting costs of overdue material. They're turning now to professional collectors. When they find you, they just might raise the possibility of a blot on your credit rating. The tactic seems to be paying off. Patrons are generally sensitive to the issue. Why do people hold onto overdue books? Laziness? Forgetfulness? Probably. One guy said the book was the perfect size to prop up a short table leg.

Friday, June 25, 2004

The Rule of Four soars, young authors cash in

By now, you've probably heard of *The Rule of Four*, the new novel authored by [two young college grads](#) who were inspired by *The Secret History* as much as

anything. There is much more of a classic thriller, which has some touting it as the next *The Da Vinci Code*. The plot revolves around two Princeton students racing to unravel the mystery of the obscure 500-year old "Hypnerotomachia Poliphili," which has baffled many for ages. The book, certainly long on suspense, has soared to No. 3 on the [New York Times' best-seller list](#), right behind Dan Brown's blockbuster. Warner Bros. has apparently bought the movie rights.

Thursday, June 24, 2004

[First-time novelist sells book for \\$2 million](#)

Wow! For Elizabeth Kostova, a graduate of the MFA program at the University of Michigan, the dream has come true. She spent a decade researching and writing a novel titled *The Historian*. Following a heated auction that included some very big publishing firms, Time Warner's Little, Brown just unit won the rights to publish it for \$2 million. Obviously, some powerful people found it a compelling read. Can't wait to open it. Here's a few [more details](#).

Monday, June 21, 2004

[Celebrating 100 years of Ulysses](#)

You've probably read a lot about this milestone. But perhaps the most interesting of all celebrations was in Dublin itself. North Great George's Street, where Joyce once lived, was the scene of street performers acting out scenes from the novel. How's this for an achievement: Philip Joyce, a grand-nephew of the author, walked 160 miles over five days to attend.

Thursday, June 10, 2004

[New self-publishing system makes a splash](#)

So you've decided to swallow your pride and self-publish. The good news is that you can do it a lot cheaper with a new system pioneered by InstaBook. It is less robust than services such as AuthorHouse, iUniverse and Xlibris. Still, at \$150 for printing 10 copies of up to 200 pages, it is a bargain.

Monday, Dec. 1, 2003

[The magic of *The Da Vinci Code*](#)

I really enjoyed Dan Brown's super successful *The Da Vinci Code*. I liked it so much, I ended up reading *Angels & Demons*. Apparently, a lot of others have done the same. Both books are on the best-seller lists. He is on a roll.

Monday, Dec. 1, 2003

[Book parties raised to art form](#)

A good book party combines an author, his or her best friends, other people (the more famous the better) and lots of alcohol. In Washington, D.C., they are part of the cultural landscape. For the writer of course, it's all about sales.

[Stephen King felled by pneumonia](#)

A National Book Award means something! Before he was scheduled to receive his, the Master of Horror was diagnosed with pneumonia in his right lung. His condition worsened when he returned to Maine.

[Finding Time \(Four Years\) for Proust...](#)

The New York Times
Tue May 24 2005
13:03:07 GMT-0400
(Eastern Standard Time)

[A Nation Is Born, and You Are There...](#)

The New York Times
Mon May 23 2005
18:49:27 GMT-0400
(Eastern Standard Time)

['Follies': The Goddess of Small Things...](#)

The New York Times
Sun May 22 2005
01:02:49 GMT-0400
(Eastern Standard Time)

[Why Exactly Do We Want to Hold the Saudis' Hand?...](#)

The New York Times
Sat May 21 2005
02:02:41 GMT-0400
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Friday, Nov. 14, 2003

Zoe Trope, a precocious talent

At 15, she landed a \$100,000 contract from a major New York publishing house to write about her hellish school days. Two years and one book later, she is taking a year off before going to college. She possesses some striking talent - and attitude.

Tuesday, Nov. 4, 2003

Mark Twain's house gets a facelift

The addition to the Mark Twain museum was created so deftly that the \$16.5 million, 35,000-square-foot building manages to expand the Twain House facilities "without stealing the thunder of the Victorian-era Twain House itself," says the Washington Post.

Best-paid author in history

Is this any surprise? J.K. Rowling is the best-paid author ever, according to the BBC. She has sold 230 million books worldwide and has emerged as a gravy train for those who work for and with her.

Friday, Oct. 24, 2003

Critic rediscovers early Anne Tyler novel

The esteemed critic Jonathan Yardley has revisited *The Clock Winder*, Anne Tyler's fourth novel. He suggests the novel fulfills the promise of her early work and intimates the greatness she would achieve a decade later beginning with *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant*. The sad aspect is that, given today's industry, her talent would likely not have been nurtured to the same degree.

Novelist aims to reunite WWII lovers

This is quite a story. A man whisked away from his wife and daughter to serve hard time in Siberia. He finds another love in his despair, but after 51 years, his lover pushes him to finally go home to find his family. A writer now wants the man's lover to join them.

Tuesday, Oct. 21, 2003

Master of horror pulls out of 'Net teaching gig

He's just too busy! Stephen King said last November he would like to teach an interactive class for junior high students. But it's not gong to happen this year.

Mariane Pearl's mighty heart

It's hard to imagine a more depressing environment in which to write. But Mariane Pearl wrote her memoir, *A Mighty Heart: The Brave Life and Death of My Husband*, as a way of coping. The act was only partially successful. Perhaps one can never really recover from what she experienced.

Friday, Oct. 17, 2003

Self-publishing near-success: Big, bad series

No one wanted Lawrance Binda's books. They seemed like downers, depressing fare. But he persists by self-publishing his Big Bad series, which features quick profiles of bad guys grouped by name. *The Big, Bad Book of*

[Publisher's Weekly](#)

[USA Today's Books](#)

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Jim features Jim Bakker, James Earl Ray, Jim Miller, and so on.

Top writers vie for National Book Awards

T. Coraghessan Boyle, Marianne Wiggins, Shirley Hazzard, Edward P. Jones and Scott Spencer are up for the National Book Award, which will be announced in November. The awards event will feature a special medal given to Stephen King. Steve Martin has hosted the event for the past five years. This year, Walter Mosley will take a turn.

Thursday, Oct. 16, 2003

Movie shines light on Sylvia Plath

Just as Nicole Kidman generated interest in Virginia Wolf, Gwyneth Paltrow will focus literary attention on Sylvia Plath. The movie *Sylvia* opens this week. A slew of Plath-related books will hit store shelves.

Friday, Oct. 10, 2003

Fall reading suggestions - memoirs

Looks like a bumper crop of memoirs and biographies this season. The big names are Lucille Ball and Ronald Reagan. The big news in memoirs is that small lives can make large literary impressions.

Tuesday, Oct. 7, 2003

More on Nobel winner

In many ways, he's everything you would think a literary icon would be. A near recluse. Too bad for J.M. Coetzee, he just won the Nobel. After he won, the Swedish Academy was unable to reach him at the University of Chicago. Neither could his editor.

Former Nobel winner grants interview

Nadine Gordimer, a former Nobel winner, is as shy as writers come. Long ago she was made a symbol of South Africa's white conscience. Today, as she Gordimer approaches her 80th birthday, she remains something of a mystery. But to promote a new book, she'll grant an interview.

Thursday, Oct. 2, 2003

Minn. writer comes home

Charles Baxter says coming home to Minneapolis is "both familiar and strange." I guess we've all felt like that at some point. The need to belong figures in his new novel *Saul and Patsy*, which is now out.

Literary renegade, Vollman pulls no punches

Thanks to books like *Whores for Gloria*, *The Rainbow Stories* and others, William T. Vollmann has earned a cult following and comparisons to Thomas Pynchon. He is something of a literary renegade, known for his fascination with violence.

Friday, Sept. 26, 2003

George Plimpton dies

He did it all. He wrote, critiqued, edited, acted, fooled and basically enjoyed life as a lion of the literary world. I'll never forget his piece in Sports Illustrated about Sidd Finch. He'll be remembered for his unique brand of "participatory journalism," which allowed him to play quarterback for the Lions and the gong in an orchestra.

Chinese publisher refuses to budge on Hilary book

The publisher of Hilary Rodham Clinton's memoirs does not intend to restore the passages it deleted from her book. The ten deleted pages, unsurprisingly, offered her somewhat critical views of China. Simon & Schuster called the omissions a breach of contract and made the offending passages available on its Web site in English and Chinese.

Edward Said dies

He was a tireless advocate for the Palestinian people, admired for the eloquence of his arguments and his willingness to stand up. He shed a lot of light on a tough debate for the public. At times, I forgot he was a professor of comparative literature.

Tuesday, Sept. 23, 2003

Where writers are rock stars

At the fourth annual New Yorker Festival, the writers were the stars. The event, as usual, brings magazines many fans to the Big Apple for a series of events that are sold-out way in advance.

Wednesday, Sept. 17, 2003

Madonna's new book launched

Believe it or not, Madonna's *The English Roses*, a children's book, was the biggest world launch in publishing history. Thirty languages and one-hundred countries! She's scheduled to pen five more morality tales by 2004.

Liberal writers rack up sales

Just when you thought that conservative writers had triumphed, the other side makes a comeback. Five liberal books are among The New York Times's top 15 hard-cover nonfiction bestsellers. What does it mean?

Monday, Sept. 15, 2003

Just so you know: These four mags are powerful

The power of the trade magazine reviewers is as high as ever. *Publishers Weekly*, *Kirkus Reviews*, *Library Journal*, and *Booklist* are not well-known magazines. But that thanks to deals with online booksellers, their pithy reviews are very influential.

Stephen King wins big award

The Master of Horror is a fine writer but is he a literary writer? The National Book Foundation thinks highly enough of his work that it will award him a special National Book Award. King joins a list of previous recipients that includes John Updike, Arthur Miller, Philip Roth and Toni Morrison. Some say the foundation was under pressure to shake up its stodgy image.

Thursday, Sept.11, 2003

New genre emerges: True-life novel

Writers increasingly are creating books based on real-life events, blurring the fact-fiction line in the process. If a work is labeled fiction, I see no problem. But what about when a work of non-fiction seems more like a novel?

Disgraced reporter lands big book deal

Jayson Blair has proven again that notoriety sells. You just need the right agent. The fallen-angel former New York Times reporter will receive roughly \$500,000 from L.A.-based New Millennium Press, which will publish his *Burning Down My Master's House: My Life at The New York Times*.

Monday, Sept. 8, 2003

New Grisham novel no thriller

The King of Commercial Fiction has written a new novel. And it's not thriller. It's more in the vein of *The Painted House* and *Skipping Christmas*. A mere 163 pages, *Bleachers* is set in a football crazy small town. It draws on the writer's experiences as high-school quarterback.

Hogwarts Express vandalized

The anti-Potter forces have struck again. This time, The Hogwarts Express, the train used by Warner Bros. in the the Harry Potter movies, has been defaced with graffiti. The clean-up cost is estimated at \$5,000. When its not being used in films, the train carries tourists between the seaside resort of Scarborough and York.

Friday, Sept. 5, 2003

Orwell caught on film

The famed author was thought to have eluded film capture his entire life. But some early footage of his has been discovered in an archive. The 18-year-old Eric Blair, as he then was known, is shown taking the field at the Eton Wall Game of 1921. At a gangling 6' 3", he towers above his peers.

Wednesday, Sept. 3, 2003

Footballer and friends pen novel

Luther Blissett, a U.K. footballer who rose to fame after a disastrous season, is now a novelist, thanks in part to his friends. A postman, a bouncer, a librarian and a social worker. They decided to write a collective novel under Blissett's name. It was nominated for a Guardian First Book Award 2003.

Writer gets great advance publicity

He hasn't even finished the book yet! A. J. Jacobs, a senior editor at Esquire, is writing a book based on his reading of the Encyclopedia Britannica, all 44 million words. Periodically, he gets invited to speak on NPR about what he has learned.

Former POW, with Bragg, to tell story

Jessica Lynch, the ex-POW whose rescue made her a hero, has agreed to tell her story in a \$1 million book deal with Alfred A. Knopf. The writer will be none other than Rick Bragg, who rocked the boat at the New York Times before resigning.

Tuesday, Sept. 2, 2003

Year of the Hollywood novel?

Erstwhile TV producer Steven Bochco has just written his first novel. He joins a slew of movie people who are testing the waters. Is this the year of the Hollywood novel?

Wednesday, Aug. 27, 2003

Bradbury birthday celebrated with Mars

The 83rd birthday of famed science fiction writer Ray Bradbury just happened to coincide with Mars' closest approach to Earth. That was nearly 60,000 years ago. A California group celebrated Bradbury's big day in appropriate fashion. The great sci-fi writer seemed touched.

So this is what a book tour is like

Carolyn Parkhurst is on tour to promote *The Dogs of Babel*, her first novel. Despite the odd questions, sparse crowds and sheer redundancy of it all, she's lucky. A lot of authors get zero marketing support. She would be crazy to complain.

Monday, Aug. 25, 2003

Investment pays for author's friend

Kent Nelson came up with a novel approach to paying the bills while he wrote a novel. He asked a friend to give him \$5,000 to get him by as he wrote *Land That Moves, Land That Stands Still*. In return, he promised him a cut of the profit. Guess what? His friend might make some money.

Toni Morrison about to publish new novel

She is 72 and still writing with as much energy as ever. Her next novel, due in November, is simply titled *Love*. As with all her books, this will be a major literary event. The early word is that it packs the force of *Song of Solomon* and *Beloved*.

Thursday, Aug. 21, 2003

Tom Clancy's latest novel as timely as ever

The Teeth of the Tiger deals with a secret spy group that operates with the President's blessing in the shadowy world of espionage. It can be read as a defense of the Iraq war as well as a story of new-generation spooks fighting a Colombian dealer aligned with an Islamic extremist. Clancy himself says he just writes fiction, not political tracts.

Author slaps chick-lit critics

Jenny Colgan, author of *Amanda's Wedding*, criticizes the "hairy legged" reviewers who take one look at "fluffy pink covers" and sharpen their knives. Listen to this: "Chick-lit is a deliberately condescending term they use to rubbish us all. If they called it slut-lit it couldn't be any more insulting." Well said!

Monday, Aug. 18, 2003

Presidential novel

Jimmy Carter has become the first American President to publish a novel. *The Hornet's Nest* is a historical novel set amid the Revolutionary War. Despite a busy schedule, he gets up at 5 am and writes to 8 am every day.

For your reading list ...

As if you didn't have enough to read! *Publishers Weekly* offers a list of notable books that will be released soon. At the top: A spate of books re-examining the assassination of JFK. A Bill Clinton biography and a new novel by David Guterson also are on tap.

Thursday, Aug. 14, 2003

Candace Bushnell loves the limelight

To say that the woman who wrote *Sex and the City* has profoundly influenced the way the world views single women is an exaggeration. But you can't argue with her commercial success, which she clearly enjoys. No matter what you think of her work, we can all agree she is very cool.

Mark Haddon finds success - finally

He wrote five unpublished novels over 15 years before publishing *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, which has rocketed to worldwide success. The wait was well worth it, judging from the critical and commercial response.

Writers publish their own essays

These 12 writers took matters into their own hands, publishing a collection of their own travel essays. Surprisingly, the book sold out before it was even printed. It even generated some profits. Soon, the book was picked up by Globe Pequot, which reissued the book a few months ago.

Wednesday, Aug. 13, 2003

Madonna pens children's book

The material girl has written her first novel. The plot of *The English Roses* is a secret, but it is said to be based on her spiritual lodestar, the mystical Jewish guide, the kabbala. The book will be released Sept. 15.

Critics aims to revive Civil War-era Washington

In his quest to revive forgotten classics, Washington Post critic Jonathan Yardley has turned his attention to Margaret Leech's *Reveille in Washington: 1860-1865*. The esteemed critic calls this popular history a masterpiece of storytelling "written with the novelist's eye for character and telling detail as well as the novelist's command of narrative."

Amy Tan battles Lyme disease

She smells dead rats. She sees naked people approaching her bed. She hears a ringing in her ears. This is what it means to suffer late-stage Lyme disease. It's been quite a battle for Amy Tan, who somehow keeps on writing.

Monday, Aug. 11, 2003

Brandeis wins award, praise

The Book of Dead Birds, by Gayle Brandeis, has won the Bellwether Prize, a new award by Barbara Kingsolver that rewards literature focused on social responsibility. Her main character is half-Korean, half-African-American and grappling with thorny eco-issues.

Columnist: 'Malaise' in literary world

This columnist detects a lingering malaise in the literary world. He looks at the upcoming crop of novels from top authors and sees little to make him think that American fiction is thriving.

All those piled-high discount books

Where do they come from? You can't miss them piled up at all kinds of stores with very low prices. They're called remainders. And they're pretty important in the bookselling business.

Thursday, Aug. 7, 2003

Hard working, and young, writer

Christopher Paolini's parents published his first-and-only fantasy novel, but the teen writer took sales into his own hands. Why, he's even arm-wrestled a Montana farmhand to peddle a copy! His pluck paid off when Knopf picked up his book. I find his attitude inspirational.

Da Vinci as a thriller character

What does the historical Leonardo Da Vinci have in common with the one in Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code*? The short answer is, Not really all that much. But hey, it's fiction. And *The Da Vinci Code* is still a terrific read.

Master of horror is now a columnist

The last time Stephen King had a regular column was back in college at the University of Maine. But he's back in pundit mode for Entertainment Weekly, where his monthly column, The Pop of King, debuted this month.

Tuesday, Aug. 5, 2003

America's greatest living novelist?

Thomas Berger, 78, has published 22 novels, and is super-highly regarded in literary circles. At least one writer of note calls him our greatest living novelist. This appreciation is a worthy read.

Friday, Aug. 1, 2003

Serious comic books for serious readers

The genre has slowly gathered force over the last decade. A watershed moment came in 1992, when a special Pulitzer Prize went to a graphic novel, *Maus*, a two-volume Holocaust allegory by Art Spiegelman. Since then, more than 1,000 titles have been published. Some liken the genre to 1970s rock, a bit pretentious but not lacking aficionados.

Wednesday, July 30

Nom de plume trend among novelists

Let's face it. These days, you've got one chance to make it as an novelist. If your first book doesn't sell, your name is mud - or worse. One way around that is to use a different name. Of course, established authors do it all the time for all sorts of reasons.

Russian officials seek to downplay dissidents

In revamping the reading list for high school students, the Russian government seems to be downplaying the watershed works of dissident novelists, seeking instead a return to a 1970s-era reading list. Truly, this would be a step backwards.

Tuesday, July 29

Chick Lit in perspective

Is the phenomena over already? Or is it just beginning? The debate rages. No matter what your opinion, you have to agree that the genre has created some spunky memorable characters that are perhaps being made trite by the sheer number of titles with similarly spunky characters.

Americans yawn at translated fiction

While we love Chick Lit (at least some of us), we are much less enthusiastic about translated literature. Quick, who is Imre Kertesz? If you didn't know that he is a Nobel winner from Hungary, you are hardly alone.

Friday, July 25

Zadie Smith's Defining Moment

The British Broadcasting Corp. has started an intriguing series in which they ask people about the defining moment in their lives. Zadie's moment concerns a boy she deemed beautiful but unattainable.

Romance writers convene

More than 2,000 gathered in New York the Romance Writers of America's 23rd annual national conference. The four-day event featured over 500 authors. The rest paid homage.

Wednesday, July 23

Le Carre's Next Book

The master espionage writer will base his next book on the war in Iraq. *Absolute Friends* is scheduled to be released early next year by Little, Brown and Company, which says the plot concerns one-time rival spies who become "caught up in the fallout of the American war against Iraq."

Homespun book clubs a force

Beauty and the Book is the name of Kathy Patrick's bookstore/beauty parlor. It is also the meeting place of the Pulpwood Queens book club. They appear to be mere middle-aged moms at a neighborhood pot luck. In reality, they're a powerful force in the book world.

Jeffrey Archer freed from jail

Lord Archer is out of jail, after serving two years for "perjury and perverting the course of justice." He said little upon release, though he screamed "bastards," as he drove past reporters. But his prison diaries said a lot, including an account of how he hired fixers "to provide him with luxuries in jail, and how he had continued to deal in art and jewels from his cell."

Monday, July 21

The publishing industry today

The industry today is in flux. A cliché, to be sure, but true. This essay is therefore must reading. It may entertain you. It may horrify you. But it is the reality that all writers and would-be writers must deal with. For an in-depth look what it all means from an [author's perspective](#), consider this [article](#) a companion piece.

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Friday, July 18

Once again, Oxford American shuts down

The first time this stylish southern magazine shut down, it was seen as a tragedy. This time around, it's not that earth-shattering, especially given the advertising economy. True to their southern nature, the editors are already suggesting the publication will [rise again](#).

'Dark and stormy night' tradition continues

Mariann Simms, of Wetumpka, Ala., won \$250 in the 22nd Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest, which celebrates horrific writing. Her entry features an inspired beginning-of-novel comparing failed romance to cheese.

Wednesday, July 16

Mark Haddon's stunning debut

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time is wowing people around the world. First-time novelist Mark Haddon has a rare literary hit with his story narrated by a boy suffering from Asperger's syndrome, a high-functioning form of autism.

Hilary tour draws well

She's hardly Harry Potter, but Hilary Clinton is drawing well-wishers by the thousands. In Boston, fans started lining up outside the Charles Hotel at 6 a.m., to get a glimpse of her as she promoted her memoir, *Living History*.

[Archive](#)