



# Reading On....

May-June 2006

## EPIC has arrived...nearly...

The Wairarapa Library Service has decided to purchase the extensive electronic reference resource called EPIC.

This is no doubt meaningless to many *Reading On* readers so by way of an introduction this short article gives you an overview of this valuable resource.

EPIC is actually a consortium of electronic databases that would not normally be available to the general public, except for a very large fee. The EPIC consortium (made up of the National Library of New Zealand and a group of large metropolitan libraries) has been able to negotiate with the database owners to provide access free to public library card bearers.

The databases consist of a wide range of information including biographical and historical information, world politics and economics, science, music and the arts...the list goes on!!!

For those doing homework of special interest will be the electronic access to the Encyclopaedia Britannica and the Oxford English Dictionary.

EPIC will be available at each of the four Wairarapa Library Service libraries (ask a librarian about access) and eventually at home via the WLS website using your card and PIN number.

The contract for EPIC has only just been signed so we don't have a definite time line for it coming online. A further update on this new resource will appear in the next addition of *Reading On*, until watch out for publicity in the libraries, and don't forget ask a librarian!!!

## Website Update...

Take a look at our new website. Rachel at Carterton Library along with the designers at Simpson design have been working hard on this project. Now we have a much more user friendly and attractive website. If you are not familiar with it go to [www.wls.org.nz](http://www.wls.org.nz) and take a look.

We have added a community noticeboard so if you want something added please let the libraries know and we will see what we can do to have it put on. This is still a learning curve for us all so no promises just yet!!!

There is also a photo section and a link to the history of each individual library; Carterton and Greytown available now, the other two still coming.

## Library live on line.....

- Did you know you can now access your library card from the internet?
- Load a PIN on your library card and then you can.....
- Renew your own books (except those that have Reserves on them)
- View your reading history
- Reserve books from our catalogue
- Our website address

[www.wls.org.nz](http://www.wls.org.nz)





## Books to Read on a Desert Island.....

### .....Peter Norman

When Sylvia our Greytown Librarian, asked me what books I would take to a desert island, I felt exposed to the paucity of my reading, as here I was 80 years old and not a book in my head. It got better. I was born into a family with strong English associations. My parents talked about going “home” and my reading was ‘Sons of Empire’ stuff, when Mercator’s Projection of the world was mainly red.

My first serious book as a schoolboy was ‘Sanders of the River’. I loved the idea of a white officer with 20 native soldiers ruling half of Africa but then I saw the film and was terrified.

I graduated to Kipling’s ‘Stalky and Co’ and as a boarding school boy was entranced at the thought of boys not much older than me going out to the Northwest frontier of old India to face the Pathans. I was into Henty’s books about the navy and remember ‘Up the Irrawaddy’ in particular. I recollect my mother read Phillip Gibbs and Warwick Deeping and that reading those authors opened me up to Europe.

It would take me the rest of my time on the island to read again all the volumes of Winston Churchill’s ‘History of the Second World War’. What an improvement that man’s prose made to the English language. I admire the moments when he wrote “give me please, on one sheet of paper your proposal for dealing with this matter” and his stirring speeches to the house containing those famous statements “never in the field of human endeavour”... and “we will fight them on the beaches” etc.

In my adulthood and for lighter reading I have enjoyed Le Carre, Rosamund Pilcher, Joanna Trollope and Mary Wesley....but I’m afraid they may not travel.

I’d like to have my long lost Pear’s Encyclopaedia, the companion of my school days, and also a dictionary as there are still lots of words that I need to look up.

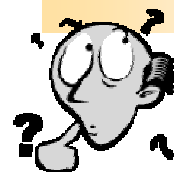
The Churchill War Histories would keep me going for a longish time, but may I take a flag, and annexe this presumably undiscovered island for New Zealand so that our country will begin to send money to it and rescue me.

## Typoglycemia

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Amzanig huh? Yaeh and you awlyas thought slpeling was ipmorantt.

**Don’t overlook this because it looks weird...it is fascinating and believe it or not you can read it.**



# Book Review...

## State of the Union by Douglas Kennedy

The last two novels by Douglas Kennedy have been written from a woman's perspective and have earned him a huge female fan base.

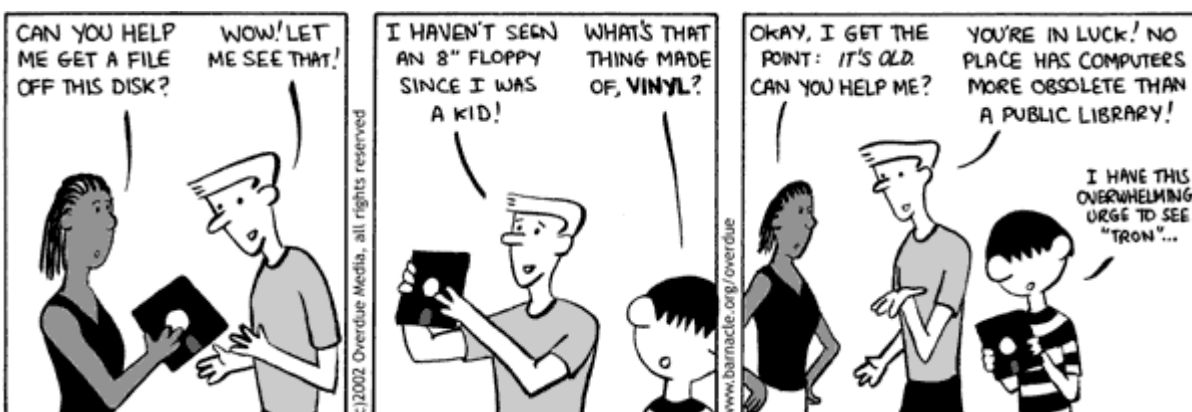
His latest novel is once again narrated by a female protagonist and is sure to be as eagerly read and discussed by book clubs as were **In Pursuit of Happiness** and **A Special Relationship**.

In 1969 Hannah Latham is an eighteen year old arts student attending the University of Vermont. Her father is a radical history professor from a blue blood Boston family who has been in the forefront of the anti-Vietnam movement. Her mother, a Jewish New Yorker by birth, is a painter with an intriguing past. Both of them are disappointed that their only child has no interest in either radical politics or modern art. Indeed, all Hannah really wants to do is to marry and have an 'ordinary' family life. In her second year at university Hannah falls in love with Dan, a medical student five years her senior. Despite her mother's opposition, the young couple marry and very soon after there is a baby on the way.

Dan takes up the position of GP in a small town in Maine and suddenly Hannah is a frustrated housewife with a demanding baby and an inattentive husband, just as her mother predicted. While the marriage is going through a rough patch, Dan is called away to be by his dying father's bedside and an unexpected visitor arrives in town. Toby Judson is a high profile student activist and a friend of Hannah's father. He needs a temporary place to stay and Hannah agrees to put him up for a few nights, in accordance with her fathers wishes.

Desperately unhappy and longing for some excitement in her life, Hannah has a two day fling with Toby, before realizing that he is far more sinister than he seems. In order to get him to leave Hannah promises to herself that she will never ever betray Dan again but neither does she tell him what really happened.

Thirty years later her secret comes back to haunt her, just as she is trying to cope with the mysterious disappearance of her own daughter. Suddenly Hannah finds herself an outcast, battling to save her marriage, her family and her career. *State of the Union* is Douglas Kennedy's most powerful novel yet and is sure to generate a great deal of discussion about shifts in American values and attitudes over the past thirty years.



## Stupid Library Questions!

All of these situations are real and some of them were mighty embarrassing. Enjoy!

Actual reference queries reported by American and Canadian library reference desk workers of various levels.

“Do you have books here?”

“Do you have a list of all the books written in the English language?”

“Do you have a list of all the books I’ve ever read?”

“I’m looking for Robert James Waller’s book, “Waltzing Through Grand Rapids. "Actual title wanted: “Slow Waltz in Cedar Bend”)

“Do you have that book by Rushdie: Satanic Nurses? " Actual title: “Satanic Verses”)

“Where is the reference desk?” This was asked of a person sitting at a desk who had, hanging above her head, a sign saying “REFERENCE DESK!”

“I was here about three weeks ago looking at a cookbook that cost \$39.95. Do you know which one it is?”

“Which outlets in the library are appropriate for my hair dryer?”

“Can you tell me why so many famous civil war battles were fought on National Park sites?”

“Do you have any books with photographs of dinosaurs?”

“I need a colour photograph of George Washington (or Christopher Columbus, king Arthur, Moses, Socrates, etc.)”

“I need to find out Ibid’s first name for my bibliography”

“Why don’t you have any books written by Ibid? He’s written a lot of important stuff.”

‘I’m looking for information on carpal tunnel syndrome. I think I’m having trouble with it in my neck”

“Is the basement upstairs?” (Asked at the First Floor Reference Desk)

“I am looking for a list of laws that I can break that would send me back to jail for a couple of months”

## Who is.....Alexander McCall Smith

McCall Smith was born in what is now Zimbabwe and was educated there and in Scotland. He became a law professor in Scotland, and it was in this role that he first returned to Africa to work in Botswana, where he helped to set up a law school at the University of Botswana. He is currently Professor of Medical Law at the University of Edinburgh, but has been a visiting professor at a number of other Universities elsewhere, including Italy and the United States.

In addition to his University work, he was for four years the vice-chairman of the Human Genetic Commission of the U.K., the chairman of the British Medical Journal Ethics Committee, and a member of the International Bioethics Commission of UNESCO.

Alexander McCall Smith currently lives in Edinburgh with his wife Elizabeth (an Edinburgh doctor), their two daughter, Lucy and Emily, and their cat Gordon. His hobbies include playing wind instruments, and he is the co-founder of an amateur orchestra called ‘The Really Terrible Orchestra’ in which he plays the bassoon and his wife plays the flute.