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# TIMES ONLINE



“If the parents were Sloanes, the kids must be thick” Camilla Cavendish

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From [The Times](#) March 24, 2007

## Hot type

### The deals, steals and snubs from the world of books

Nicholas Clee

A panel chaired by the Poet Laureate has chosen the second poet — unless you count Harold Pinter — to win the David Cohen Prize for Literature. Derek Mahon took the £40,000 award for a lifetime's achievement as, in Andrew Motion's words, “one of the most original and subtle poets writing in the English language”.

The Second World War spymistress Vera Atkins is the subject of rival biographies: an authorised one by Sarah Helm, and now a very-much-unauthorised one by William Stevenson. The Atkins family objects to Stevenson's aggrandising of her wartime exploits. He has said that there were muddles with his publisher, Arcade, in New York. The company says that the family wants to undermine its book to promote the Helm version.

If Premiership footballers do not read much for their own pleasure, at least they read to their children, according to a list of their favourite books. Half of the 20 footballers — one from each Premiership club — chose children's titles. Ben Thatcher, the Charlton Athletic hard man, picked *The Tiger Who Came to Tea* by Judith Kerr.

When Dave Eggers's literary magazine *McSweeney's* started, it invited readers to send in \$100 in return for lifetime subscriptions. *McSweeney's* is now finding its side of the bargain less attractive so it has invited subscribers to “move on”

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- ▶ Iran 'to try Britons for espionage'
- ▶ Rooney in war of words with McClaren as England falter
- ▶ Jeremy Clarkson: The Dangerous Ten
- ▶ Iran rebuffs Blair's plea for release of captives

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- ▶ Dung-eating mites throw light on Inca civilisation
- ▶ Lingerie model lays bare new class war at nursery schools
- ▶ My life as a bearded dwarf
- ▶ 'Cons of Praise' – or how BBC threw in Easter at Christmas

the arrangement. Paying for copies is “totally” a matter of choice; but the magazine is trying various sweeteners to encourage the switch.

Meg Gardiner, whose thrillers are published by Hodder in Britain, could not get a deal in her native US — until Stephen King wrote a column raving about her. That shot her to No 1 on the used book site Abebooks. Now Dutton has bought her five published novels and two new ones.

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