

Press release

Adult learners vote Peter James as their favourite Quick Read author

www.quickreads.org.uk



Crime writer Peter James is today, Friday 21 May 2010, announced as the winner of the Quick Reads Readers' Favourite Award. Voted for by readers and adult learners using the 2010 Quick Reads titles, Peter was honoured for his book *The Perfect Murder*. The award was presented by Gail Rebeck, Chair of Quick Reads and CEO of Random House, at a ceremony held in London as part of Adult Learners' Week (15-21 May).

Peter James is one of the UK's most treasured crime and thriller novelists. His winning book, *The Perfect Murder*, is a darkly humorous take on the demise of a long-suffering married couple, and was one of ten new Quick Reads titles published on World Book Day, 4 March 2010.

The Perfect Murder was chosen as this year's favourite Quick Read via an online poll and beat off stiff competition from other 2010 Quick Read authors including Rolf Harris, Cathy Kelly, Alvin Hall, Alison Weir and Andy McNab. Voters included adult literacy groups, Union Learning Representatives and library visitors along with the general public who have purchased the books.

One adult learner, aged 26 from Nottingham, commented "I loved this book - I never much liked reading at school, but this is funny, interesting and gives you ideas! I've got a small baby so not much time for reading, but I could really get stuck into this and I didn't want to put it down. I've asked my tutor to get me all the other QR books!"

Peter James is a multi-award winning writer whose *Roy Grace* detective novels are published in 33 languages and have sold over five million copies worldwide, including one million in the UK. A TV adaptation of the *Roy Grace* series is currently in development, with Peter overseeing all aspects, including the scriptwriting. The sixth novel in the series, *Dead Like You* (Macmillan £18.99) is published on 27th May.

Peter's writing reveals a unique insight into the reality of modern day police work. To ensure the accuracy of his writing, Peter works closely with Sussex CID and spends one day every fortnight with the Sussex Police, either out on patrol, attending crime scenes or in their offices. He has also worked with the police in Moscow, Munich, Melbourne, New York and Romania, and regularly attends

international police conferences to ensure he is at the cutting edge of investigative police work.

Peter is also an established film producer and script writer. He has produced numerous films, including *The Merchant Of Venice*, starring Al Pacino, Jeremy Irons and Joseph Fiennes.

Peter said of his win "I am utterly thrilled to receive this award. In my view, a life without reading books is only half a life. This wonderful Quick Reads initiative is spreading the joys and riches of reading to hundreds of thousands of people. For every good book they go on to read, they have a gift for life that can never be taken away."

Carol Taylor, NIACE Director of Operations commented, "Well done to Peter James on winning this award. He is a great writer - exciting and challenging books, with just the right amount of detail and lots of twists and turns to keep you hooked. And *The Perfect Murder* is also very funny, and very close to home for many of us!"

Quick Reads are brilliantly written new books by bestselling authors and celebrities. Part of a campaign to get people reading across the UK and Ireland, the books are perfect for people new to reading, with little time or who simply fancy a fast, fun read.

Previous winners of the Quick Reads Readers' Favourite Award are Patience Thompson, for *101 Way to get your Child to Read* in 2009; Adele Parks for her book *Happy Families*, in 2008; Ricky Tomlinson for *Reading My Arse!* in 2007 and Minette Walters who won the inaugural prize in 2006 for her book *Chickenfeed*.

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**For further information please contact Jill Cotton or Lucy Chavasse at
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Notes to Editors - www.quickreads.org.uk

- Quick Reads are short, fast books for people new to reading or those with little time. They are original books written by bestselling authors and celebrities
- Spokespeople for the Quick Reads campaign are available for interview through Colman Getty
- Quick Reads logos, photographs and book visuals are also available from Colman Getty
- For further information about Adult Learners' Week please visit www.alw.org.uk or contact Ed Melia at NIACE on 0116 204 4248 or ed.melia@niace.org.uk

- The ten 2010 Quick Reads titles are:
 - *The Perfect Holiday* by **Cathy Kelly** (HarperCollins)
 - *Last Night Another Soldier* by **Andy McNab** (Corgi Books)
 - *Traitors of the Tower* by **Alison Weir** (Vintage)
 - *The Perfect Murder* by **Peter James** (Pan)
 - *Doctor Who: Code of the Krillitanes* by **Justin Richards** (BBC Books)
 - *Hello Mum* by **Bernardine Evaristo** (Penguin)
 - *Life's Too Short: True Stories About Life at Work* with foreword by **Val McDermid** (Bantam Books)
 - *Buster Fleabags* by **Rolf Harris** (Corgi Books)
 - *Money Magic: Seven Simple Steps to True Financial Freedom* by **Alvin Hall** (Hodder)
 - *We Won the Lottery: Real Life Winner Stories* by **Danny Buckland** (Accent Press)

- In March 2010 Quick Reads commissioned a major impact evaluation of the initiative from tutors teaching over 32,000 adult learners; representatives using Quick Reads in workplaces and emergent readers. This found that:
 - All the emergent readers evaluated said that Quick Reads had had a positive impact on their lives
 - 97% of tutors agreed that Quick Reads have been useful in helping their learners to progress.
 - 90% of tutors have seen changes in learners' attitudes towards reading since using Quick Reads.
 - 62% of tutors estimated that at least half of their learners go on to read other Quick Read books and 48% estimated that half or more of their learners progress to read other books.
 - 76% of tutors said that Quick Reads improved their learners' communication skills and 53% stated that learners' written skills had improved.
 - 61% of tutors told us that their learners had progressed into further learning.
 - 40% of tutors believed that at least half of their learners have gone on to enrol on other learning courses.

For further details of this report, please contact Colman Getty.

- The Quick Reads campaign has widespread private and public-sector support from across the publishing and bookselling industries. The partners include BIS (the Department for Business, Innovations and Skills), Arts Council England, NIACE (the National Institute for Continuing Adult Education), the BBC's RaW campaign and TUC's unionlearn.

- Other partners and supporters include National Book Tokens, The Reading Agency, National Literacy Trust, The Welsh Books Council, DELNI (Department for Education and Learning, Northern Ireland), EGSA (Educational Guidance Service for Adults), LSDA (Learning and Skills Development Agency) Communities Scotland, NALA (National Adult Literacy Agency) and the Welsh Assembly.

- The Quick Reads campaign receives funding and sponsorship from BIS, Arts Council England, World Book Day and National Book Tokens