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# THE WATERSTONE'S WAY

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Issue 1

## Card Machines All Different

Scientists at Oxbridge have launched an investigation into the startling possibility that credit card machines in various retail stores have subtle differences, an anonymous source reports.



*Credit card machines: subtle differences?*

The investigation was prompted after Maureen, 74, made the breakthrough discovery that her debit card had to be inserted in an different way at her local Waterstone's branch.

"I'd been Christmas shopping in Parson's Circle shopping centre, and I'd had no problems paying with my card in any of the stores," Maureen told the Waterstone's Way in a recent interview. "It was only when my local bookseller informed me that I'd put my card in the wrong way around that alarm bells rung."

Maureen was informed that the chip needed to be inserted face down, at which point she rotated her card on the horizontal axis.

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## Hunter S. Thompson's Ashes Fired into Picadilly Branch

Commemorating the release of Ralph Steadman's biography of American journalist Hunter S. Thompson's life, a special event was held at the prestigious Picadilly Waterstone's store.

The globally acclaimed writer, who died in early 2005, famously had his ashes fired out of a cannon later that year. Recently, good friend and illustrator Ralph Steadman foresaw the launch of his memoirs and times with the self-styled gonzo journalist.

"Although it wasn't really my idea, it was suggested that we take some of Hunter's leftover ashes from the original funeral and blast them into the bookstore. I couldn't have agreed more."

Steadman went on to say how awesome it was to fire the dead legend's ashes out of a cannon, and was "keen to recreate the experience for the benefit of the public."

On the opening day of Steadman's book release, a gigantic cannon was set up inside the store for the purpose. The Waterstone's Way is happy to report that only two customer fatalities resulted in the event.

Kate Maye, Picadilly bookseller, concluded: "The whole store looked like Pompeii after Steadman fired that cannon. It was totally bitchin'."

Ralph Steadman's book, *The Joke's Over*, is now available in hardback.

## Bookseller of the Month: Kathleen McIden

The Waterstone's Way would like to congratulate Kathleen McIden, bookseller of the Durham branch and computer programming graduate, for winning the position of Bookseller of the Month.

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The bookseller in question is reported to have said: “No, um... yeah, like... no, the chip needs to... no, the stripe has to be on your left... hang on, flip it again... if you just...” before adding “*For the love of God, just give me the goddamn card!*”

It was at this point that Maureen sent the technological world into a spin, making the astounding observation that “Oooh, they’re all different, aren’t they?”.

As a result, Oxbridge is currently looking into the problem concerning human beings having a limited grasp of common sense and/or simple instructions. A resulting report is expected to be issued in late 2007.

## Bret Easton Ellis Announces Forthcoming Novel

Fiction writer Bret Easton Ellis, best known for his 1991 novel *American Psycho*, gave away details of his next novel in an interview with U.S personality David Letterman.

Tentatively titled ‘*Drugs*’, with the possible subtitle of ‘*druggy-druggy drug-drug-drugs*,’ Ellis mentioned in the interview that the new novel would be “four-hundred pages about a group of super-attractive city slickers who take lots and lots of drugs and probably have sex a lot, too.”

When a slightly-bemused Letterman pointed out that it sounded nearly exactly the same as his previous five novels, Ellis is reported to have tapped the side of his nose and uttered, “Pffff, if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.”

Insider reports have also yawned that the book will most likely feature a sketchy father/son relationship and a homosexual undertone. And drugs.

Amongst her many achievements, McIden has, so far, not let the fact that she has a first degree (with honours) in her chosen field yet has still managed to end up in what is essentially a retail job get her down. In fact, she went on to do quite the opposite by merging her expertise in computer programming with her bookselling responsibilities.

Once again, congratulations to her for tirelessly working after trading hours to make sure that any Internet users across the globe trying to log on to Amazon are instantly diverted to [waterstones.co.uk](http://waterstones.co.uk). It is this kind of sacrifice and willingness to commit international crime that has just earned Kathleen £3 worth of Waterstone’s vouchers and the title of Bookseller of the Month.

*Below: McIden and the computer used to sabotage Amazon.co.uk*



## CEO Sam Foxe Reminds Booksellers that “Punching Throats” is Not Policy

The Stafford branch of Waterstone’s came under scrutiny this week after violence was extracted against a group of customers by a member of staff.



Samantha Tolbridge, bookseller (pictured inset) was busy maintaining her allotted section when a group of fifteen-year-olds entered the store.

The teenagers made a beeline for the health section in which Tolbridge was working, instantly locating the *Kama Sutra*. An onlooking customer browsing the MBS section describes what followed.

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## HEADLINE NEWS

### Tom Waterstone: “Who’s your daddy?”

After the successful take-over bid of the Ottaker’s chain, Waterstone’s founder and namesake Tom Waterstone issued the following statement to rival booksellers W H Smith.

“Do you remember when I was an executive chairman for you guys? Huh? You remember that? Do you remember sacking me back in ’82? You guys remember saying I’d never make it as a bookselling overlord? *In your face, bitches!* Who’s your daddy now?”

“Look at the empire I rose from the ground,” he added. “You can’t touch this, you hacks. I’m on *fire!* I’m... like... a grade-twenty bookseller now. Maybe even thirty.”

W H Smith replied to Waterstone’s comments in the form of an official statement reminding him that their company still sold way more units than his. The statement also made scathing comments about Waterstone’s hair and, in particular, his odour.

“Yeah, but where’s your Ottaker’s chain, hmm?” Waterstone fired back at a conference in Paris earlier this week. “I don’t see you with any Ottaker’s stores. Oh, wait, I could be wrong. What about that one over there? Oh, no. My mistake, that’s one of ours too. *Bitches.*”

The feud continues.

### Sophie Kinsella in a Strop

Sophie Kinsella, author of the literary fiction *Shopoholic* series, is in a “right old grump,” according to her agent.

“I went to her house this morning to see if she was okay, since she hadn’t been answering my calls. God, she had a face like a smacked arse. I asked her what was up, but she just kept mumbling ‘I could have written that stupid book.’”

Other female writers who wish they had written Lauren Weisberger’s *The Devil Wears Prada* this week are as follows: Maggie Alderson, Marian Keyes, Helen Fielding, Candace Bushnell and Dan Brown.

“Oh man, you shoulda seen it! This bunch of kids bust into the store, right? They’re all, like, talking like they a billion miles away from each other. Y’know, really shouting and wearing Slipknot hoodies and whatnot. I was trying to look for *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail* but I couldn’t really concentrate with all the yelling and giggling going on. So I turn around to shoot them a disapproving-yet-not-too-confrontational look, y’know? Turns out this Samantha chick had the same idea, but more so! She just turns to these dudes and says, “excuse me...” almost as if she was going to ask if they needed some help.”

Little did the teenagers know, Samantha Tolbridge was merely luring them into a false sense of security. Satisfied that their attention was fully focussed on her, Tolbridge began systematically delivering each of the punks a punch to the throat.

Leaving the squawking kids lying on the floor and gasping for breath, Tolbridge resumed her shelving duties without subsequent interruption.

Word of the incident however reached head office, prompting Sam Foxe, CEO of Waterstone’s, to speak publicly about the incident.

“Whilst we as a family appreciate the efforts by individual booksellers to keep irritating customers in line, I have to remind all staff that punching customers in the throat is not *technically* within company policy.”

He went on to add, “We would prefer our staff to resort to less overt tactics of retribution, such as slashing customers’ tyres out of working hours and, in necessary circumstances, breaking into a customer’s house and placing very fine shards of glass in their sugar jars.”

No action has yet been taken against the bookseller in question, who is currently awaiting a probable pat on the back.

## Waterstone's New Honesty Policy

As Waterstone's recognises that honesty is integral to customer satisfaction, a new series of shelf-talkers will be shipped to national branches this week for booksellers to display under any particular titles they feel strongly about. Main additions, alongside the old chestnuts "We Love This Book" and "Waterstone's Recommends", include:

"We are really indifferent to..."

"We Kind Of Recommend This, But There's Loads of Better Books Right Over There (Behind You)"

"This Book Isn't Worth The 3 for 2 Sticker On Its Cover"

"If You Enjoy This, You'll Love Reading Something That Doesn't Actually Suck."

"It's Alright, I Suppose"

and:

"I Should Have Spent Most Of This Morning Facing-Out Prominent Titles In My Section But I Got So Hooked On This Book That I Actually Hid Behind The Discounted Humour Bay And Read It Cover To Cover When My Manager Wasn't Watching, Seriously, It's That Good. You Should Totally Buy It."

Waterstone's would like to remind all of its sexy booksellers that it is imperative to keep potential customers aware of major titles in our range through the use of such merchandising material.

## Employee Badges Depleted By 2012, Experts Predict

"They just keep vanishing. By this rate, I'll be surprised if there's any left at the end of this decade," Dr. Corey Taylor of Des Moines University predicts.

Although the disappearance of staff badges have been a concern across the bookselling chain for quite some time, an official study has only just been launched. The move was sparked after a report by a Waterstone's staff member, who wishes to remain anonymous, gave a harrowing account of how he left his badge in the staff room on his day off, only to find on his return that it had been depleted.

Dr. Taylor outlined in his preliminary report that, although the process of badge disappearance cannot be stopped or reversed, it can be slowed.

"While we're working on a way to preserve what few badges we have," Dr. Taylor went on to say, "I would like to encourage booksellers to consider alternative methods of identification for the sake of our dwindling badge supplies. One of which is to cut out a square of cardboard, draw a large W on it with a marker, then use a staple gun to attach it firmly to your right pectoral muscle. I know it isn't the ideal solution, but we've all got to pull together here."

Not to be displayed anywhere near shop floor. Please direct all love/hate mail, viruses and messages reading 'OMG ure so gunna get fired' to the editor:

[catcher\\_in\\_the\\_wheat@hotmail.com](mailto:catcher_in_the_wheat@hotmail.com)

