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Hot type

The deals, steals and snubs from the world of books

Richard and Judy not only make bestsellers, they can rescue publishing gambles too. Jed Rubenfeld's *The Interpretation of Murder*, one of their new Book Club selections, won a huge advance in the US and a big one in the UK, but sales of the novel (in which Sigmund Freud is involved in a murder case) were disappointing — until R&J came along.

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Hot Type predicts that Irène Némirovsky's *Suite Française* will be in the top five bestselling paperbacks of 2007. It was a clear choice as the novel of 2006. As well as being our Book of the Year, Booktrust reckons it gained 16 mentions in the annual round-ups, seven more than *The Night Watch* by Sarah Waters, Richard Ford's *The Lay of the Land*, *House of Meetings* by Martin Amis and Philip Roth's *Everyman*. Faber had the most titles selected.

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M. C. Beaton is one of the bestselling authors of 2006 — through the online used bookstore Abebooks. Who? Beaton, real name Marion Chesney, owes her popularity to mysteries featuring Agatha Raisin, recently played by Penelope Keith on Radio 4.

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Hot Type has reported that a company named ICUE will now download novels to your mobile phone. In Japan, this is so popular that authors specialise in mobile phone fiction. One, known as Chaco, has written five novels in 14 months; her bestseller, *What the Angel Gave Me*, has sold more than 1 million copies.

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The world is overflowing with aspiring authors, desperate to get published. But not quite desperate enough to enter the Sobol Prize, which offered \$100,000 (£51,000) and a contract with Simon & Schuster. But entrants had to pay \$85, and be represented by Sobol, an obscure literary agency. It received only 1,000 entries, and has now cancelled the prize. Richard and Judy's new writers' award got 46,000 entries.

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