

RECOMMENDED NOVELS, SHORT STORIES AND ESSAYS

Just a few of the many!

The Year of Magical Thinking Joan Didion

Insights into bereavement and grief

Rowing Without Oars Ulla-Carin Lindquist

A young woman's account of her Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis

A Short History of Tractors in Ukrainian Marina Lewycka

Elder abuse, autonomy

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time Mark Haddon

Asperger's syndrome

A Good Likeness Paul Arnott

Adoption and identity

Teacher Man Frank McCourt

The importance of teaching

Shadow Baby Margaret Forster

Child abandonment, obsession and revenge

Before I Say Goodbye

Ruth Picardie

A moving account of a young mother with terminal breast cancer

A Country Doctor's Notebook

Michael Bulgakov

The story of a lone practitioner in a vast country practice in rural Russia

The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down

Anne Fadiman

The colliding worlds of Western medicine and Hmong culture

Secrets from the Black Bag

Susan Woldenberg Butler

A fictionalised account of the lives of remote and single-handed general practitioners all over the world

The White Spider

Heinrich Harrer

The ascent of the Eiger. True stories of human courage, achievement and sacrifice

A Fortunate Man

John Berger and Jean Mohr

The story of a country doctor in the mid 60s

Once in a House on Fire

Andrea Ashworth

A story of poverty, depression, and abuse

Regeneration

Pat Barker

In Craiglockhart war hospital, Doctor William Rivers attempts to restore the sanity of officers from World War I.

The Diving-bell and the Butterfly

Jean-Dominique Bauby

A remarkable book about the author's experiences locked inside his body after a massive stroke. (Also now a film)

Complications: A Surgeon's Notes on an Imperfect Science

Atul Gawande

Dismantling the myth of medical infallibility - making mistakes, learning on the job and improvising technique and self-confidence. A reminder that doctors are people too.

The Citadel

Joseph Cronin

The experiences of a newly-qualified doctor taking up his first post with a Welsh mining community

C: Because Cowards Get Cancer Too...

John Diamond

An account of John Diamond's life with and without his cancer

A Child Called It

Pelzer

An autobiographical account of child abuse

A Suburban Shaman

Cecil Helman – GP/anthropologist

Tales from medicines frontline

Paradox of progress

James Willis

Stories about "the very stuff of GP"

Medicine and literature

John Salinsky

Volumes 1 and 2 act as guides through some of the world's greatest literature

The Green Bookshop

John and Mary Salinsky and Iona Heath

Loads of suggestions from articles in the "Green Journal" – Education for Primary Care

A number of books by Oliver Sacks including one about his own injury called A leg to stand on

These books are a treasure trove of interesting essays about unusual patients

Notes from an exhibition

Patrick Gale

The effect of mental illness on an artist on her family including interesting sections about Quakers

Deaf Sentence

David Lodge

The effects of deafness on a college lecturer both on his work but also the scrapes he gets into

Alan Bennett short stories including "The Lady in the van"

Many of his stories have huge general interest and this one about a recluse – schizophrenic lady is delightful

The sound of my voice

Ron Butlin

Short but very powerful novel about alcoholism

The Plague

Albert Camus

Allegory about suffering bravery and human existence

Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde

R L Stevenson

Creates lots of ethical discussion about doctoring

Blindness

Jose Saramago

Main theme is about the disintegration of society and how people react when the "blindness plague" threatens

Cancer Ward

Alexander Solzhenitsyn

Powerful stories based around the doctors and patients in a Russian Cancer Ward

My year off

Robert McCrum

Novelist and magazine editor has a major stroke and writes brilliantly about it the following year

Equus

Peter Shaffer

Classic play about a child who blinded horses and his story and relationship with his psychiatrist

The Kite Runner

Khaled Hosseini

Class and cultural barriers to friendship in Afghanistan and an ultimate seeking of redemption

The Good Doctor

Damon Galgut

Doctor in rural hospital in S Africa trying to maintain his ideals

The Secret Scripture

Sebastian Barry

The different perspectives of a 100 year old long term psychiatric patient and her psychiatrist about her life

Stuart a Life Backwards

Alexander Masters

Fascinating story from "grave to cradle" looking at the life of a chaotic homeless man

Way to Go

Alan Spence

Perspectives of death and dying and "creative" undertaking

The Spare Room

Helen Garner

About a woman who agrees to look after her dying friend and her difficulty coping particularly with her friend's constant search for non-medical cures.

Poetry resources: here are some websites that may be of interest.

The Poetry Society www.poetrysociety.org.uk

The Poetry Archive: www.poetryarchive.org/poetryarchive/home.do

Academy of American Poets: www.poets.org

Bloodaxe Books: www.bloodaxebooks.com - a good source for books on modern poetry

Favourite Poem Project: www.favoritepoem.org/poems/index.html

Poem Hunter: www.poemhunter.com/poems/

<http://www.plagiarist.com/> is a good poetry site

And a very good database for the humanities is

The Literature, Arts and Medicine Database:

<http://litmed.med.nyu.edu/Main?action=new>