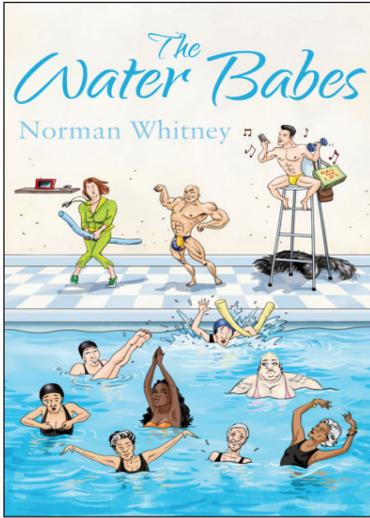




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THE WATER BABES

Norman Whitney highlights the importance of community groups in his debut novel

“I wrote *The Water Babes* partly in reaction to my very successful TEFL text book writing career, which I gave up about ten years ago,” explains Norman. “I wanted to prove to myself that I could write a novel, especially now that I am over 70. I also wanted to write a story without murder or violence.”

The Water Babes brings together people of different cultural, religious, racial and class backgrounds, with the story unfolding over the last day of the characters’ water aerobics class. Throughout the day we are witness to laughter and tears, and to various incidents and accidents, some amusing, others less so. At the evening party, more than food and drink are shared...We hear confessional surprises and endure outright shocks. All this from just one group of very different people.

But are people so very different from each other? The evidence from this slice of life of contemporary Britain is that each of us is not so different or unique as we may think. We learn that apparently different individuals may be connected to other members of their group in more ways than might at first appear. This novel demonstrates the old adage that no man – or woman – is an island. On the contrary, the story shows that we are all in this together. *The Water Babes* is a story to make you think.

“I have always been interested in group dynamics,” observes Norman. “The specific idea about aquarobics came several years ago, while I was doing an aquarobics course. Whilst none of the characters in *The Water Babes* are based on people I met on the course, it certainly sparked my imagination enough to make my novel a reality!”

NORMAN WHITNEY is a graduate of Leeds (BA, PhD), Manchester (DIP TEFL), and Ohio (MA) universities. After teaching English overseas, he lectured at Ealing College, London. He left in 1984 to begin a career in journal editing and text book writing with Oxford University Press. His course books have sold over 25 million copies worldwide. *The Water Babes* is his first novel.



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