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Unimagined

Imran Ahmad

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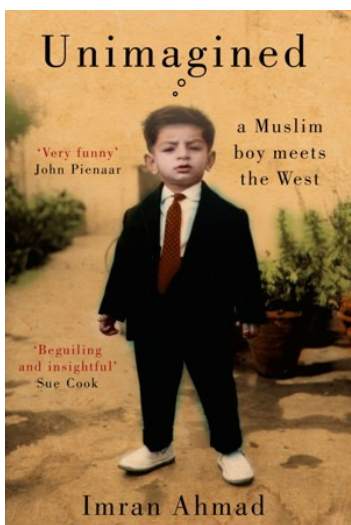
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Special Release – delivery into stores 22 September 2008


Imran Ahmad attended the recent Sydney Writers' Festival with his wonderful memoir Unimagined. Written from his own perspective, the naive, curious, engaging and smart young Imran grapples with the dilemma of learning about and embracing his Muslim identity while living in the midst of a Western world that both tempts and bewilders him. In turns delightfully funny and heart-wrenching, this is a truly special book and richly deserves the acclaim that it has already received, including being selected as the 'pick of the bunch' of the literary titles on offer by The Sydney Morning Herald in 2007.

I had the pleasure of meeting Imran while he was in Sydney and reading his book, which I found so captivating that I believed that it needed to be properly published in Australia, rather than just distributed. Hence the fact that we now proudly present this endearing and gentle book as one of our Pier 9 titles for 2008. I urge you to read it and can guarantee that you will understand our enthusiasm and passion for this very special book.

- Juliet Rogers, CEO, Murdoch Books



TITLE	Unimagined
AUTHOR	Imran Ahmad
ISBN	9781741963878
IMPRINT	Pier 9
FORMAT	Paperback with flaps
EXTENT	304 pages
RELEASE DATE	September 2008
RRP	\$24.95
QUANTITY	_____



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Imran Ahmad was born in Pakistan, grew up in London, and went to university in Scotland, before embarking on a corporate career which took him all over the world, including five years living in the United States. This is his first book.

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Number 11 in book sales at Sydney Writers' Festival 2008

The pick of the literary crop 2007 – *The Sydney Morning Herald*

The best books of 2007 – *The Independent*

Books of the year 2006 – *The Guardian*

Shortlisted for the YoungMinds Book Award 2007

Film/television rights sold

So many people write about their childhood. Yet so few people manage to get inside their own lives and describe them with genuine accuracy and honesty. Childhood seems, for most writers, to be the stuff of dreams, nostalgia or cynicism. It is rarely the stuff of immaturity, incompetence, unfairness and pettiness.

It is these rather negative qualities that make this autobiography of a young Pakistani-born Muslim growing up in England so special. The stories Ahmad recounts are so plausible that the reader can only gasp at his remarkable recall.

It is a reminder that real life is rarely high drama and frequently low pettiness. Ahmad captures this subtle texture of ordinariness perfectly. His life seems to be a series of minor racial slights (rarely is he directly confronted, like many people he interprets every rejection as a personal affront), an enduring love affair with cars (both the ones his father owns and the ones he buys when he starts working), a collection of painfully unfulfilled love affairs where he does the loving and the girls invariably only want him as 'a friend', and a string of modest academic achievements. He feels that he is intellectually better than his results and lacerates himself for his laziness, particularly when he fails to gain entry to medical school.

The result is a book written with an artless integrity which has the powerful ring of truth because it is more about wandering, bumbling and stumbling than being clear-eyed and reaching out for the glittering prizes. Almost coincidentally, it is also a fascinating insight into what it is like to grow up as a Pakistani Muslim in modern Britain.

Bruce Elder, *The Sydney Morning Herald*

'It deserves all the praise it's had – it's very clearly and vividly written, funny and perceptive ... [the narrator is a] character so original and unusual, and yet so warmly human and recognisable.'

Philip Pullman

'... an amusing and highly accessible book ...'

The Canberra Times

'... wonderfully funny, heart-warming, perceptive, enlightening and ironic ... Likely to be a word-of-mouth hit ... has the makings of a slow-build bestseller ...'

Publishing News

'Hurrah for a memoir that isn't miserable! Hurray for Imran Ahmad's terrific sense of humour ... an entertaining, moving and thoroughly thought-provoking tale of our times.'

The Daily Mail

'A compelling quest for belonging ...'

The Guardian

'I consumed *Unimagined* as soon as I started it. I couldn't wait until the plane ride. It was an absolute joy to read. I loved every moment of it ...'

Randa Abdel-Fattah, author of *Does My Head Look Big in This?* and *Ten Things I Hate About Me*