

10 February 2006



UK LIBRARY BORROWERS TURN TO CRIME

PLR Figures Highlight Growing Popularity of Crime Fiction, Thrillers and Children's Books

Adult library borrowers today are turning away from romance in favour of crime and thrillers, according to figures released today by Public Lending Right (PLR).

The list of the Top 10 Most Borrowed Titles in the UK for 2004/5 reveals that the gritty forensic novels of US writers such as Patricia Cornwell, Kathy Reichs and James Patterson have gained in popularity with borrowers, compared with previous years when romantic fiction dominated the Top 20 (see tables attached).

Whilst novels by Josephine Cox, Joanna Trollope and Danielle Steel are still favourites with library-goers, Dame Catherine Cookson, who reigned supreme as the UK's most borrowed author for 17 years, has dropped out of the list of Top 10 Most Borrowed Authors for the first time since records began in 1984.

Today's PLR figures also reveal the continuing popularity of children's books in libraries. Children's writer and current Children's Laureate, Jacqueline Wilson was today named as the most borrowed UK author for the third year running. Three other children's writers – Mick Inkpen, Janet & Allan Ahlberg and Roald Dahl - also appear in the list of the Top 10 Most Borrowed Authors in the UK.

Simon Brett, Chair of the PLR Advisory Committee, and himself a crime novelist commented: *"The data Public Lending Right provides always helps to build up a revealing picture of the nation's reading habits. This year sees crime fiction and thrillers stealing a march on romance. Maybe this is an indication that national tastes are becoming increasingly macabre. It's certainly very good news for those of us who write crime."*

PLR was established by an Act of Parliament in 1979. It gives authors the legal right to receive remuneration from government for the public's use of their work through the public library system. Based in Stockton-on-Tees, PLR tracks library loans across the UK, and makes payments to authors based on the number of times their books have been borrowed from libraries. This year, authors are receiving a record payment of 5.57 pence per loan for books taken out from July 2004 – June 2005.

TOP 10 MOST BORROWED ADULT FICTION TITLES

2004/5

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Patricia Cornwell | Blow Fly |
| 2. Josephine Cox | Lovers and Liars |
| 3. John Grisham | The Last Juror |
| 4. Joanna Trollope | Brother & Sister |
| 5. P J Tracy | Want to Play? |
| 6. Maeve Binchy | Nights of Rain and Stars |
| 7. James Patterson | Big Bad Wolf |
| 8. James Patterson & Andrew Gross | The Third Degree |
| 9. Ian Rankin | A Question of Blood |
| 10. Kathy Reichs | Monday Mourning |

1999/2000

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Catherine Cookson | The Solace of Sin |
| 2. Catherine Cookson | The Thursday Friend |
| 3. Catherine Cookson | The Blind Years |
| 4. Catherine Cookson | The Desert Crop |
| 5. Catherine Cookson | Riley |
| 6. Catherine Cookson | The Lady on My Left |
| 7. Catherine Cookson | The Bondage of Love |
| 8. Maeve Binchy | Tara Road |
| 9. Catherine Cookson | The Bonny Dawn |
| 10. Catherine Cookson | A Ruthless Need |

1994/1995

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Catherine Cookson | The Year of the Virgins |
| 2. Catherine Cookson | Justice is a Woman |
| 3. Catherine Cookson | The Rag Nymph |
| 4. Catherine Cookson | The House of Women |
| 5. Catherine Cookson | My Beloved Son |
| 6. Catherine Cookson | The Golden Straw |
| 7. Catherine Cookson | The Maltese Angel |
| 8. Catherine Cookson | The Wingless Bird |
| 9. Catherine Cookson | The Gillyvors |
| 10. Barbara Taylor Bradford | Remember |

