



IT'S CRIMINAL

Latest PLR data reveals huge popularity of US crime novels and thrillers with UK borrowers

Thrillers and crime novels by American writers dominate the Top 10 list of the Most Borrowed Titles from UK libraries, according to annual data released today by Public Lending Right (PLR) on the eve of National Libraries Day.

The UK's Most Borrowed Title of 2010/2011 was "The Lost Symbol" by Dan Brown. The Top 10 also features five books written or co-written by James Patterson; and two thrillers by British-born writer, Lee Child who lives in the US. Crime writer Ian Rankin is the only UK-resident author in the Top 10.

The Most Borrowed Titles list is in marked contrast with that of a decade ago. Then, British authors prevailed, romance ruled and five books by Catherine Cookson featured in the Top 10. Since that time however, UK borrowers have, it seems, turned to crime.

Commenting on the trend, Lee Child said "In the decade following 9/11, I believe crime fiction has become more important in people's lives. It gratifies their desire for safety and security and the rule of law, because at the end of crime novels, order is restored. And in US crime fiction and thrillers, the canvas is bigger, and the stakes are higher, making them particularly successful in this context".

UK's Most Borrowed Titles 2010/11

1. The Lost Symbol	Dan Brown
2. 61 Hours	Lee Child
3. Private	James Patterson
4. 9 th Judgement	James Patterson
5. Worst Case	James Patterson
6. Caught	Harlan Coben
7. Don't Blink	James Patterson & Howard Roughan
8. The Postcard Killers	James Patterson & Lisa Marklund
9. The Complaints	Ian Rankin
10. Worth Dying For	Lee Child

UK's Most Borrowed Titles 2000/1

1. The Thursday Friend	Catherine Cookson
2. The Blind Years	Catherine Cookson
3. Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire	JK Rowling
4. The Solace of Sin	Catherine Cookson
5. The Lady on My Left	Catherine Cookson
6. A House Divided	Catherine Cookson
7. Second Wind	Dick Francis
8. Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets	JK Rowling
9. Tara Road	Maeve Binchy
10. Black Notice	Patricia Cornwell

With over 2 million loans, prolific American writer James Patterson is the UK's Most Borrowed Author for the fifth year running, the PLR data also shows. He is one of five writers to clock up over a million loans in UK libraries between July 2010 and June 2011.

Five of the Top 10 Most Borrowed Authors are children's writers - Daisy Meadows, the brand behind the "Rainbow Magic" series (2nd); former champion lender Jacqueline Wilson (4th); Francesca Simon, author of the "Horrid Henry" series (5th); Children's Laureate, Julia Donaldson (7th); and Mick Inkpen (9th) - underlining the continuing importance of libraries in encouraging children to read.

What PLR Means To Writers

Over the three decades since Public Lending Right was established in law in 1979, annual PLR payments have become increasingly vital for writers. As the price of books has dropped on the high street, the average writer has seen both advances and royalties dwindle. By 2007 the average writer's earnings had dropped to less than 25% of the national average wage with the top 10% of writers earning more than 50% of the total income available to writers.

PLR is a source of income that writers do not share with publishers or agents; it does not discriminate according to sales figures or celebrity status. Its principles have not changed for over 30 years, and the income it provides for writers is as important as ever. In a survey of PLR's top earners, 80% specified that their annual PLR payment is core to their income.

In February 2012, PLR will make payments totalling £6.5 million to 23,718 authors. This year's rate per loan is 6.05 pence, down from last year's figure of 6.25 pence.

Sarah Edworthy recently became the 50,000th author to register for PLR for "Hostage: A Year at Gunpoint with Somali Gangsters", the book she co-wrote with Paul and Rachel Chandler.

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Editors' Notes

1. PLR was established by Act of Parliament in 1979. It gives authors the legal right to receive payment from government each time their books are loaned through the public library system.
2. PLR is funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). This year PLR is distributing £6.5 million to 23,718 authors at a rate per loan of 6.05 pence. Since its inception in 1979, PLR has distributed over £132 million to authors.
3. In October 2010 the government announced that the PLR office is to be abolished as part of the wider Public Bodies Review. Responsibility for the PLR Scheme will be transferred to another existing public body. A decision on this is expected later in the year following public consultation. PLR as the author's right to payment for book loans continues and future government funding has been announced. Funding will decrease by 15% over the four year period from £7.2 million in 2011/12 to £6.96 million in 2014/15.
4. Authors are eligible for payment if their PLR earnings reach a minimum of £1. There is a maximum payment threshold of £6,600 for the top-lending authors. This year, 211 authors will receive the maximum payment.
5. Authors living in other European Union countries qualify for UK PLR payments for loans of their books from public libraries here. British authors receive payment from the new PLR scheme in Ireland (paid directly); and from other European PLR systems including France, Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain and Estonia (payments distributed by the Authors' Licensing & Collecting Society).
6. PLR's sophisticated data analysis system (LEWIS) offers public libraries a vital tool to support effective and efficient business decisions. The analysis gives them a comprehensive picture of national reading trends, changes in our national and regional reading habits and a fascinating insight into our preferences, pastimes and obsessions.
7. National Libraries Day (4 February 2012) is a nation-wide celebration of libraries, librarians and library staff in all sectors – public libraries, school and university libraries, prison, national, law, business and commercial libraries. For more information see <http://www.nationallibrariesday.org.uk/>
8. Lee Child's latest novel is "The Affair", published in hardback by Bantam Press.

