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Best-Selling Recent Fiction 1999

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approval vendors categorize. That’s our role, and all that happens downstream flows from this first step, a bibliographer’s categorization of books by subject, format, and readership level.

Some decisions are straightforward; some are not. Categorizing works of fiction into our readership level categories of “Popular” and “General—Academic” is one of the most difficult decisions we make each day. It’s an act of instant literary criticism that we perform in a matter of minutes, separating novels that seem to show literary ambition from those which aim to fit squarely into a genre.

That’s not to say “wheat from chaff,” since these days academic libraries show some interest in genre novels, reflecting the attention that mysteries, science fiction, and other popular works now receive from scholars in their research and teaching.

Here are two lists of novels, our best-selling titles over the past six months in YBP’s “General—Academic” and “Popular” categories, each arranged in descending order by number of copies sold. The former still outshines the latter—with Ralph Ellison’s *Juneteenth*, with 114 copies sold to date, outselling our top popular novel, Thomas Harris’s *Hannibal*, by a margin of a bit more than two to one. Likewise, in moving down the list of books, *Ernest Hemingway, Salman Rushdie, Willa Cather, Joyce Carol Oates*, and Julian Barnes all trounce Anne Rice, Stephen King, and Mary Higgins Clark when it comes to sales per title. While this surely reverses the pattern you’ve seen at your local Borders or Barnes & Noble, the library sales we see today for popular novels are sometimes considerable, if not approaching the level of interest we see for their weightier cousins. We hope that our lists will help to spark a debate on the literary canon within your library.

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**Innovations**

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Prices for each title range from US$20 to $75, comparable to a hard-cover book or a trade paperback and considerably less than printed facsimile editions. This now makes it affordable for the retail consumer or a researcher to own a facsimile of rare first editions of landmark publications of Western civilization. (Last year, a copy of Galileo Galilei’s *Sidereus Nuncius* with a folio missing sold at auction for $250,000.)

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Octavo is creating a digital preservation solution as well as a publishing program. By using the highest resolution digital camera available and taking the time to properly photograph books, manuscripts, and other material, Octavo’s data files can be stored for centuries and be migrated to new digital media as they are developed.

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“General—Academic” Level Fiction


Collins, Wilkie. *Iolanthe; Or, Tahiti As It Was: A Romance*, ed. by Ira B. Nadel. Princeton Univ 1999 $24.95 Cloth 069103446x


Guterson, David. *East of the Mountains*. Harcourt Brace 1999 $25.00 Cloth 0151002290


Siegel, Lee. *Love in a Dead Language*. Univ of Chicago 1999 $25.00 Cloth 0226756971


Cather, Willa. *Death Comes for the Archbishop*, ed. by John J. Murphy. Univ of Nebraska 1999 $60.00 Cloth 0803214294

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Cornwall, Patricia Daniels. **Black Notice.** G.P. Putnam's 1999 $25.95 Cloth 0399145087

Lafarge, Paul. **Artist of the Missing.** Farrar, Straus 1999 $13.00 Paper 0374525803

Durant, Isadore, 1945-. **Death Among the Fossils.** Univ of New Mexico 1999 $21.95 Cloth 0826319505

Draper, Robert. **Hadrian's Wall.** Alfred A. Knopf 1999 $22.50 Cloth 0375403698


Airth, Rennie. **River of Darkness.** Viking 1999 $24.95 Cloth 0670885959

Hickam, Homer H. **Back to the Moon: A Novel.** Delacorte 1999 $23.95 Cloth 0385334222

Clark, Mary Higgins. **We'll Meet Again.** Simon & Schuster 1999 $24.50 Cloth 0684835975

Mount, Ferdinand. **Jem (And Sam): A Novel.** Carroll & Graf 1999 $25.69 Cloth 078670649X

Gaus, Paul L. **Blood of the Prodigal: An Ohio Amish Mystery.** Ohio Univ Press 1999 $24.95 Cloth 0821412760

Darnton, John. **Experiment.** Dutton 1999 $24.95 Cloth 0525945172

Evanovich, Janet. **High Five.** St. Martin's/Trade 1999 $23.95 Cloth 0312203039

Chace, Rebecca. **Capture the Flag: A Novel.** Simon & Schuster 1999 $22.50 Cloth 0684857588

Mason, Richard. **Drowning People.** Warner 1999 $23.50 Cloth 0446525243

Aubert, Rosemary. **Feast of Stephen: An Ellis Portal Mystery.** Bridge Works 1999 $22.95 Cloth 1882593278

Hambly, Barbara. **Graveyard Dust.** Bantam 1999 $23.95 Cloth 0553102591

Massey, Sujata. **Flower Master.** HarperCollins 1999 $24.00 Cloth 0060192283

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Oregon Trails — Support Your Local Bookseller

by Tom Leonhardt (Director of the Library, Oregon Institute of Technology) <leohnart@oit.edu

It was late June 1973 when I began work at Stanford as the Gifts and Exchange Librarian, part of the Acquisitions Department. Stanford was already automating (BALLOTS) its order and receiving processes and its main book vendor, among many, was Richard Abel and Company. As it turned out, having an automated ordering system was a godsend when most of the book orders had to be re-directed a couple of years later. Around that same time, I needed a special service from any book jobber who would help me out.

Once upon a time, universities, including those in the United States, published much of their own research and made those publications available to their libraries for international exchange in the interests of scholarly communication and dissemination of information. By the time I got involved in the international exchange of scholarly information, it was already declining but propped up by cold war politics, Communism, and the Soviet Union. In exchange for what we received, we sent exchange lists of duplicates and unwanted gifts. Stanford had few free publications and only a few sources that offered us heavily discounted prices—the Stanford Press, the Hoover Institution Press, and Annual Reviews (Stanford professors started that publishing house). All of this together was not enough to satisfy the Soviet libraries. They wanted new U.S. imprints and lots of them. I did not have the staff and time to acquire and ship large numbers of books to the Soviet Union so I approached Stanford's major book suppliers (Richard Abel was already in the history books by then) but none of them would place our orders; drop ship the books to the Soviet Union (various libraries throughout the USSR), and bill the Stanford University Libraries' Gift & Exchange Division.

Don Coombs of Coulls and Fred Gullette of Academic Book Center were two of the many vendor reps who called continued on page 64

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