

Who else writes like...? A readers' guide to fiction authors. 5th ed.

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Similar to previous editions, it was a privilege to review the 5th edition of *Who else writes like...?* It is an excellent publication which can widen the reading horizons of any serious reader who have exhausted all publications of their favourite authors, as well as those who have no idea how to pursue their interests in a particular genre such as crime or thrillers. Although a UK based publication, I believe *Who else writes like...?* should be on the reference desks of all public libraries of English speaking countries. Serious readers can buy copies of their own which at £19.99 seems very affordable in comparison to average book prices, considering the hours of reading fun and exploration that may follow. It certainly would be a useful companion when visiting your local library or bookshop, and taking out books on behalf of the home-bound and busy spouses.

Who else writes like...? is structured according to the following sections: acknowledgements, introduction, an explanation on how to use the guide, and a list of abbreviations for nationality and place of birth as well as literary prizes and awards. This is followed by an alphabetical list of authors, an author list according to genre, characters and series, a list of literary prizes and awards, and recommendations for books and websites for further reading. The genres include adventure/thriller; aga saga; chick lit; crime; fantasy; glitz and glamour; historical; horror; lad lit; saga; science fiction; sea and war. The main author entries include the date of birth (and where appropriate, date of death), where this is known, and for authors who are not English, the nationality or place of birth. Pseudonyms and relevant websites are included. Where authors write exclusively within a category or genre this is indicated, as are the names of characters, series and/or environments that regularly feature in a writer's work. Brief details of literary prizes won are also included. The number of alternative authors listed for each author varies between three and twelve with a system of crosslinking connecting authors.

Who else writes like...? lists 1 875 authors based on their popularity in the UK as derived from statistics that are provided by the Registrar of Public Lending Right, and advise from a panel of experienced UK librarians. Although it is admitted that no author writes exactly like another, the guide has proven very useful in directing readers to other authors of interest. If you for example like the work of Joanne Harris, you may also like Emma Donoghue, Lucy Ellman, Sarah Kate Lynch, Michle Roberts, Polly Samson, Barbara Trapido, Salley Vickers and Barbara Wood. Authors of various nationalities, other than British are included, such as South African, Australian, Cuban, Russian and Polish. (It might be useful to include a list, similar to the genre list, of nationalities and their authors following a visit of Poland I was curious about the Polish authors, but would need to work through individual author entries). Apart from the main alphabetical list suggesting alternative authors, readers can also identify alternative authors by means of the index of genres, or the list of prize winners at the back of the book. There is also an index to characters and series in fiction as well as a bibliography of other fiction guides and useful websites.

The well-bound, soft-cover publication is of a convenient size: easy to manage by both the librarian and library patron. The layout is clear and the font easy to read. I whole-heartedly recommend *Who else writes like...?* to public and school libraries, and is certainly going to recommend it to my favourite bookshop. It can be ordered directly from LISU, Loughborough University, Loughborough, LE113TU. Tel: +44(0)1509 635680, Fax: +44(0)1509 635699. Email: lisu@lboro.ac.uk

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