

Sandra Brown, a writer of romantic suspense, is always a favorite. However, have you ever read anything by **Heather Graham** (hard-edged romantic stories in atmospheric southern settings) or **Stella Cameron** (plenty of rich and famous trappings and independent female protagonists)? Other authors to try include **Karen Robards** or **Catherine Coulter**.

Michael Connelly combines the trappings of the police procedural with the heroism of the classic private eye. His books are very popular. Some other authors whose books you might also enjoy include Ross MacDonald, Jeremiah Healy, Harlan Coben, James Lee Burke, or Ridley Pearson.

Janet Evanovich, author of humorous mysteries that star eccentric characters and a sassy protagonist, enjoys great success. In case her newest Stephanie Plum mystery is not available, check out some other funny mysteries that feature out-spoken female characters, like Sarah Strohmeier's series featuring unreserved U.S. Marshall Lilly Bennett

Sue Grafton, one of the first women to break down the sexual barrier and enter the previously all-male world of hard-boiled private eye, remains very popular. Her character, Kinsey Millhone, of the alphabet series is a tough, stubborn, but self-assured loner. There is a darker tone in her books than in the Stephanie Plum series. Some books closer in feel to Grafton's are mysteries by Marcia Muller, Sara Paretsky, or Nevada Barr.

Jonathan Kellerman, writer of tension-building complex mysteries whose characters provide psychological insights into the minds of the criminal is another author in demand. Lucky for you that Piscataway Library provides other good authors that offer comparable psychological insights and investigative techniques. For instance, there is **Stephen Walsh White**, **Sarah Lovett** and **Keith Ablow** and **Ridley Pearson**, all whom explore the psychological motivations behind the criminal mind.

Dean Koontz combines suspense with horror and fantasy. If you enjoy the paranormal elements in his novels, try reading **Greg Bear**, who mixes scientific and paranormal elements with suspense, **Dan Simmons**, or **John Saul**.

Elmore Leonard writes dark, fast-moving crime thrillers populated with an array of sleazy characters. For similar reads, try **George V. Higgins**, who writes dialogue-driven crime and political thrillers, **Robert Ferrigno**'s crime thrillers set in a sleazy South California town, Sue Grafton's alphabet series about Kinsey Millhone, or Jon A. Jackson's mysteries.

James Patterson is an author of fast paced, violent novels of hard-edged suspense. He is so popular that it is almost impossible to find his newest on the shelf. You might have more luck finding **John Sandford**'s titles and would probably enjoy his Prey series. Another author to try is **Greg Iles** or **Jeff Deaver**, whose books are full of plot twists, psychological overtones and menace.

Nora Roberts delights readers with her explorations of relationships and stories centering on strong, yet vulnerable heroines. Her newest books are always in demand. For a change, you may want to check out **Jane Anne Krentz**, who employs more humor, but also emphasizes family connections and friendships, **Mary Jo Putney**, known for adventure-filled historical romances, or **Elizabeth Lowell**.

Books by **Nicholas Sparks**, master of poignant love stories with bittersweet endings, make good reading summer or winter. In case his newest is already out, travel to the earlier part of the fiction stacks and try novels by **Emily Grayson**. She writes in a more dramatic style about romantic relationships with emotional endings. Even further down sits books by **Richard Paul Evans**, gentle stories of love and inspiration.

Danielle Steel, a perennial favorite, warms readers' hearts with touching tales of strong, usually female, protagonists, who face difficulties and emerge stronger. The Library cannot buy enough copies of her newest to keep available at all times. Fortunately, **Barbara Delinsky**, **Barbara Taylor Bradford** and **Eileen Goudge** are also writers who explore the lives and relationships of strong female characters.

So, step outside the box, just a little bit and enjoy an author you may have overlooked.

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