

BLOG BYTES



by Kristopher Zgorski

Live and Deadly (<https://liveanddeadly.net>) bills itself as “book reviews with a criminal slant.” This U.K.-based blog has been mentioned in the column before, but now consistently posts excellent content. Presented by the site’s owner and reviewer, Mary, with the most recent content at the top of the page, *Live and Deadly* can be read in this chronological manner, or for those looking to curate their blog experience, the search and category functions make finding the desired coverage fast and easy. Mary’s reviews do a good job of outlining the basic premise of a novel before delving into her personal opinions about various elements. I also love how she ends each review with a detailed bio of the author—perfect for those wanting to know more about the talent behind the pen. Mary also covers public appearances and events in her area, allowing readers who are not nearby to really feel as though they were at the event. Like most book blogs of this type, *Live and Deadly* hosts cover reveals and provides coverage of crime-fiction festivals. *Live and Deadly* started in 2015, so there is a wealth of information to be explored for first-time visitors.

People Magazine has always been one of the traditional outlets to cover books and book-related news. Their online portal for book coverage (<https://people.com/books>) is available to nonsubscribers and is a great place to look for the latest information. While they don’t specialize in any particular genre, *People* regularly features items of interest for crime-fiction readers. What is most fun is that they link their book coverage to other areas of the magazine, such as movies, health, music, politics, parenting, and more, so readers can really focus on those areas that are of particular interest to them.

Prepare to be lost for hours at *BookBrowse* (<https://www.book-browse.com/index.cfm>). Billed as your guide to exceptional books, this site literally has something for everyone. While there is a reasonable membership fee (of about \$5 a month) for some of their exclusive content and access to their monthly *BookBrowse Review*, there is plenty of free content for those not interested in signing up. One of the most useful functions is the “Read-Alikes,” where readers can search for a book they loved and find a list of other books that are similar and likely to be enjoyed by the same fans. This feature also works with authors, rather than specific books, so it can be utilized in multiple ways. Links to book-club discussion questions are also handy for those wanting to initiate deeper conversations about their favorite books. Another useful feature is a pronunciation guide for authors’ names so that readers can be sure they are getting that right.

And here’s a tip for you as we head into the summer season: A simple

Google search on the term “Beach Reads” will return an up-to-date list of articles that will highlight some books that are perfect to accompany you on your vacation, to take down to the pool, or to share with your family at the next picnic in the park.

© 2023 by *Kristopher Zgorski*