



Bestsellers: A Very Short Introduction (Very Short Introductions)

John Sutherland

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'I rejoice', said Doctor Johnson, 'to concur with the Common Reader.' For the last century, the tastes and preferences of the common reader have been reflected in the American and British bestseller lists, and this Very Short Introduction takes an engaging look through the lists to reveal what we have been reading - and why.

John Sutherland shows that bestseller lists monitor one of the strongest pulses in modern literature and are therefore worthy of serious study. Along the way, he lifts the lid on the bestseller industry, examines what makes a book into a bestseller, and asks what separates bestsellers from canonical fiction.

Exploring the relationship between bestsellers and the fashions, ideologies, and cultural concerns of the day, the book includes short case-studies and lively summaries of bestsellers through the years: from *In His Steps* - now almost totally forgotten, but the biggest all-time bestseller between 1895 and 1945, to *Gone with the Wind* and *The Andromeda Strain*, and *The Da Vinci Code*.

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