

## Librarian's Shelf

By Lori Juhlin

### What's In a Name?

Dr. Suess, Richard Bachman, Amanda Quick, Sophie Kinsella, Lemony Snicket, Ellis, Acton, and Currer Bell, the list could go on and on. For hundreds of years, authors have been writing under pen names, or pseudonyms. In recent news, someone discovered that Robert Galbraith, author of a well-received crime novel "Cuckoo's Calling," was actually written by author J.K. Rowling. Some called it a smart move for an author that came to fame for "Harry Potter," especially after her debut adult novel "The Casual Vacancy," was met with less than positive reviews.

Having read all of the "Harry Potter" novels, and listened to the audiobook of the "Casual Vacancy," after struggling to get into actually reading the print version, I can say that I absolutely loved "Harry Potter," and after a while somewhat enjoyed listening to Casual Vacancy on my way to and from work every day. I'm glad I gave it a second chance, because it was a good book, it just took a while to get into it.

I am now working my way through "Cuckoo's Calling," and I must say that I was wondering what it would be like. More than half-way through the book, I find the characters interesting, and don't want to put the book down. There are plenty of twists and turns, and it will be interesting to see where this series goes.

J.K. Rowling admitted, once her secret was out that "she assumed the pseudonym in order to 'publish without hype or expectation.' She called it a 'liberating experience' and 'a pure pleasure to get feedback from publishers and readers under a different name.' Now that her secret's out, sales have skyrocketed 507,000%," according to Time magazine's website.

I really believe that her writing was allowed to shine under the guise of Robert Galbraith, and showed people that she is more than "Harry Potter."

Many authors, past and present, have used different names for this and other reasons. In the early days of the publishing world, women could not get published; so many women took on male pen names. Ellis, Acton, and Currer Bell were the Bronte sisters who went on to write under their own names. Anyone who thinks that the double standard in the publishing industry went away with women's liberation is sadly mistaken. J.K. Rowling was told by her publisher that her books would not sell as well to boys if they were written by a woman, so J.K. Rowling was born.

Authors' use pen names for other reasons as well, take for example J.D. Robb & Nora Roberts, Amanda Quick & Jayne Ann Krentz. These women write under multiple names based on the

genre of their books. This allows them to write different genres under different names, and allows their fans to differentiate their work.

Some pseudonyms are easier to find or are widely known, while others may take a bit of detective work to discover. One great website that allows you to see if someone writes under multiple names is [www.fantasticfiction.co.uk](http://www.fantasticfiction.co.uk), where you can search your favorite author, and in most cases see if they write under another name. Whether your favorite author writes books under one name or many, come in and see all the great things happening at Columbus Public Library and find your next great book!