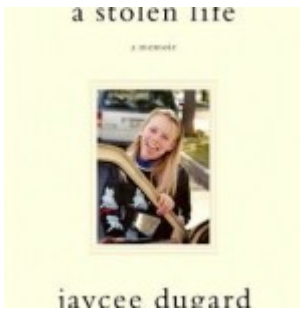


Dugard's book breathing life into publishing world

By Ben Schenkel, Sacramento Bee

Jaycee Lee Dugard's memoir, "A Stolen Life," has been zipping off bookstore shelves since its release two Tuesdays ago.



Orders for new copies from Amazon.com are taking up to two months to fill. If that wait is too long, resellers at the website will sell you the tell-all – for nearly twice the price.

That's right, used.

That blockbuster of a book, along with George R.R. Martin's "A Dance With Dragons," has energized summer sales in an industry beset by upheaval.

Just last week, Borders announced the liquidation of its big-box stores, including five in the Sacramento area and the Carson City store. Amazon is resisting having to charge its California customers the state sales tax. Ironically, independent bookstores are holding their own in this morphing landscape, despite predictions to the contrary.

Though not exactly "beach reads," with their dark and complex premises, the Dugard and Martin books have transcended expectations for how they would sell and be read – and by whom.

They have seemingly little in common, besides their July 12 release date and their status as the top best-sellers nationwide.

"A Stolen Life" (Simon & Schuster, \$24.99, 288 pages) is the

harrowing account of the 18 years the author spent in captivity and the abuses she endured.

“A Dance With Dragons” (Bantam, \$35, 1,040 pages) is the long-awaited fifth part of a fantasy series called “A Song of Ice and Fire.” Its narrators are many and its conflicts all too unreal.

Retailers and publishing veterans say the books have attracted readers who wouldn't normally gravitate to those genres – or to any book whatsoever.

Read the whole story