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[Review of] The Stephen King Companion

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Stephen King


This assortment of essays, interviews, speeches, synopses, and trivia will be of interest to the multitude of King's readers. While not as critical and scholarly as Douglas E. Winter's Stephen King: The Act of Darkness (New American Library, rev. ed., 1986), readers do get a wide-range picture of King, his works, and his impact on the genre of horror fiction and popular culture. Section 1 provides a profile of King through a reprint of his interview with Playboy, a previously unpublished transcript of a Banned Books Week lecture he delivered, and other commentary and sketches by various observers. In section 2, his impact on the culture is examined, including reactions of fans and critics and an overview of his audio-published works. Section 3 is the true reference section of the book with an alphabetically arranged collection of synopses of his works. Scattered throughout are various sidebars that provide trivia and additional observations. Many photographs enhance the text. A useful appendix lists King's works in print; books about King and his works; films, videos, and audiocassettes; a price guide to collectibles; and a guide to resources. The book is limited in its reference value, however, by the absence of an index. This work would be particularly useful to a seminar course on King, providing background for a more in-depth examination of the works. [R: LJ, 1 Nov 89, p. 84]—ROBERT AKEN