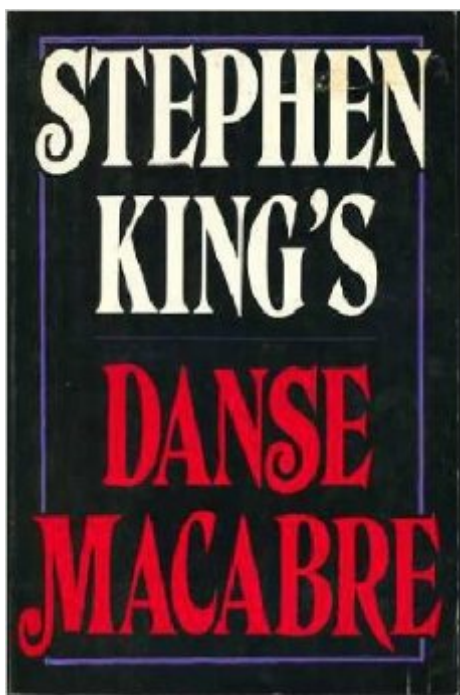


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Danse Macabre



Synopsis

The author whose boundless imagination and storytelling powers have redefined the horror genre, from 1974's *Carrie* to his epic *Under the Dome*, reflects on the very nature of terror—what scares us and why—in films (both cheesy and choice), television and radio, and, of course, the horror novel, past and present. Informal, engaging, tremendous fun, and tremendously informative, *Danse Macabre* is an essential tour with the master of horror as your guide; much like his spellbinding works of fiction, you won't be able to put it down. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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Customer Reviews

As many of the other reviews here imply, whether or not you'll like *DANSE MACABRE* really depends on how much you're interested in reading what and how people think about literature. Obviously, being a fan of horror stories doesn't mean you like to read about what people think about horror, and from the reviews people wrote here, I'd say they expected to read a Stephen King novel. Still, this seems to me like a good book for people who don't want to get too deep into literary criticism but would like to think about horror at another level. The book's best feature is King's breezy readable style. I'm surprised at the people who had a hard time getting through it because it's an extremely readable book. (Again, I can only guess it's because these people don't like this kind of book--they bought it expecting something else). I've used this book in a course I've taught on horror film and fiction, and it's been pretty well received by my students. The drawbacks (if you think of them as drawbacks) are: 1. King has little to say about his own fiction or the many film versions of

it.2. It jumps all over the place. King does have some interesting things to say about novels like FRANKENSTEIN and DRACULA but not all that much. That's fair enough--this book is as much an account of what makes horror interesting for King as it is about the horror genre--but it leaves me wanting more. Good book for someone who's just getting into reading about horror as a genre, but probably less than satisfying to somebody who wants more. I'd actually recommend Twitchell's DREADFUL PLEASURES as a better introduction to horror--but I'd bet people who were bored with this book would also hate that one (even though I think it's quite readable).

This is my favorite Stephen King book--I've read it considerably more times than any of his other works. I don't think it's any secret what makes this book so enjoyable--it's really what makes all of his books work--his storytelling power. He has such a friendly, compelling narrative voice--it's like he's casually, and yet powerfully sharing secrets with you, and you can't wait to hear what he has to say next. It might help to enjoy DANSE MACABRE if you are a horror fiction/film fanatic, but then again, it might just make you one even if you're not--it had that effect on me. I tried to see as many of the films and read as many of the books he discussed as I could. (I don't share his warm feelings for the movie "Prophesy" or Peter Straub's "Ghost Story," but join him in highly recommending Ramsey Campbell's horribly titled "The Doll Who Ate His Mother" and the unforgettable "Dawn of the Dead.") Next I moved on to the list of recommended books and movies at the end, and found most of those very worthwhile as well. If you're borderline compulsive like I am, finding a list like that is probably a bad thing--you can't rest until you've checked everything off it, which would probably take a lifetime. I've worked on it on and off for over a decade and am not much more than half done. But the quest goes on, for which I must thank Mr. King, and more specifically, this delightful, engaging, illuminating book.

I have read many books of criticism and opinion on the subject of horror fiction. However, no single author has been able to cover the field of modern horror better than Stephen King. In *Danse Macabre* King makes the field of horror accessible to the general reader. There are books which explain the Freudian overtones of *Dracula* or the anti-establishment message of *Night of the Living Dead* which is, for all practical purposes, useless. English and Cinema majors may find it useful, but the general reader has no time or concern for these trifles. King, while at times veering off topic, gives the reader a road map for the field of horror. He introduces and discusses writers which the general reader of fiction may never have heard of, like James Herbert and Harlan Ellison. And never does the book become boring. King's love for the genre shows in this work. It is like attending an

Einstein lecture on Physics; it may get a bit complicated at times, but you know that old Al will bring an energy and enthusiasm to the subject which no one else could ever hope to copy. Other Books Recommended: Stephen Jones and Kim Newman's Horror 100 Best Books (Unusual, Unorthodox, Unbelievable, The Single best book on horror by one than more author)

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