



Point Horror: Funhouse | Don't Look Behind You

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News to Choice:

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Book

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Mystery and horror are the lynchpins of much fiction produced for teenagers. The effectiveness of this combination is obvious in the 'Point Horror' series - girls in Upper School worry at me for the newest title.

The initial attraction lies in the dramatic, fluorescent covers and modest price; their further appeal is secured by similarity in the construction of the plots. The protagonists are female, with attendant boyfriends, and settings determinedly rooted in the everyday. A small circle of stereotyped - and therefore comfordingly familiar - friends alternately support or undermine the heroine. The security which the reader gains from fore-knowledge of plot and character is seasoned with the excitement generated by the red herring.

Duncan employs the same strategies with equal success - but her work is a progression from the Point Horror collection. It's the subtlety of style and sustained quality of the narrative which elevate her. The reader is still comfortably caught in a web of linguistic certainty, but has more freedom to interpret and respond.

Both books offer challenges - Point Horror is addictive and book box material for older readers ready to tackle a book, but needing closely defined limits. Duncan could be offered as a class set for GCSE - perfect as a component for a study of the thriller genre.

Running Order:

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