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Dead Giveaways

Andrew Donkin
Element Books (July 1998)
Unknown $4.95 (128pp)
978-1-901881-05-9

Andrew Donkin presents stories of real crimes and explains how each was solved through “amazing scientific evidence, personality profiling and paranormal investigations.” Brief, yet exciting accounts of about 50 actual crimes are given and then followed by descriptions of the steps investigators take to unravel the evidence leading to convicting the criminal.

This straightforward book is easy for young readers to comprehend, yet it includes enough technical information to hold the interest of junior high students. The descriptions of the crimes are concise and not sensational. The crime-solving techniques range from evidence that is visually apparent at the scene to fingerprinting, DNA testing, psychic assistance, and the use of computers in constructing virtual crime scenes. The black and white illustrations lend a sense of suspense.

In closing the book, Donkin discusses the future of crime detection and then provides a multi-choice questionnaire for readers to assess their powers of memory, observation and eye for detail. A good choice for fourth to eighth-grade readers.

DAWN FARLEY (July / August 1998)

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