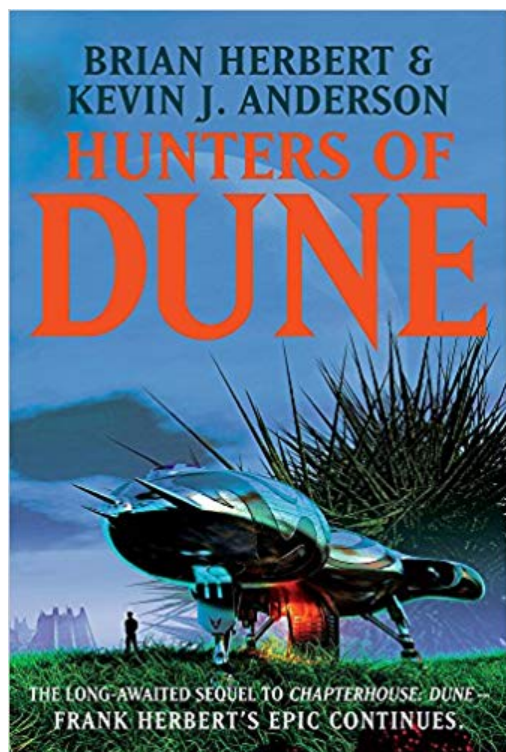


Hunters of Dune *by* Brian Herbert and Kevin J Anderson



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Reviews of the *Hunters of Dune* *by* Brian Herbert and Kevin J Anderson

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This continuation of Herbert's Dune series is unspeakably bad. I was actually angry that I felt committed enough to the Dune universe that I felt I had to see this book through to the end. Shame on all those involved for desecrating the legacy of the elder Herbert's work. "Super human stud against amber-haired temptress." This is an actual line in the book used to describe love making between Duncan and Murbella. I was almost embarrassed reading it. I have to believe if Frank Herbert were alive today he would be outraged. This is all you need to know to make a decision about this book. Sometimes in life you have to ask yourself if you are up to a task before undertaking it, just because something can be done does not mean it should be.

Lightseeker

I read Dune a long time ago, and was blown away by what has become one of my favorite novels of all time, SF or otherwise. I continued to read SF and Fantasy through my twenties, but found it harder and harder to find quality writing. So I turned to classic literature and subscribed to the Easton Press 100 Greatest Books series. That really opened my eyes to how juvenile most of the SF/F genre really was. Don't get me wrong, there are some very good SF/F novels out there, and I remember many of them fondly, but for the most part what you see in your local mega-book store is pulp SF/F junk, more akin to fast food than to literature. However, I am still of the opinion that all reading should be encouraged, and if someone reads long enough they will eventually find their way to worthwhile literature. Sadly, Hunters of Dune is among some of the worst pulp fare I have ever had the misfortune to read.

When Easton Press recently published the six original Dune novels in a matching set, I decided to add them to my library and reread the series. When I originally read it, I recall my interest waning as I got to the second half, but as I reread them many years later I found that I liked the latter books just as much as the first three. They are just as intriguing, but in their own way. I find them to be more refined SF, with broader scope and philosophical themes which appeal to me more now than they did in my youth. Unfortunately, there is nothing refined or even remotely philosophical about the talentless efforts of Frank Herbert's son to capitalize on his father's name and Dune legacy.

I won't even try to catalog the overwhelming number of defects that we are subjected to by the sadly unimaginative semi-literate steaming turd that is Hunters of Dune. Other reviewers here have done an admirable job of that already. What really annoyed me, however, even more than the ridiculously juvenile writing style, was the utter disregard for Frank Herbert's well-developed character personalities and histories. Frank's son and his hired hack would have us believe that prior events clearly laid out by the elder Herbert did not really happen that way, and that his ingeniously developed characters would actually behave completely differently than they did in the original six novels. We would have been better off if Frank Herbert's posthumously discovered outline for the conclusion of the Dune series was published instead and the Infinite Monkey Theorem were invoked to complete it. The outcome would most certainly have been superior to what we have today. At least Tolkien's son didn't try to pretend he was a writer and limited himself to presenting his father's unfinished works and notes. Unfortunately, the hubris of Herbert's son has led to a diminution of Dune.

Bajinn

NO SPOILERS

Never have I been so enraged by a piece of entertainment that I have been compelled to write a review, until I mistakenly committed to re-read the entire Dune series, this time including Hunters of Dune and Sandworms of Dune. Sure, I've read poorly written books before, but I've never read a series that so thoroughly squandered the original author's vision.

True - taking on the monumental task of completing the (possibly genius) works of Frank Herbert was destined to fail to meet the somewhat impossible expectations of his readers, but this... this was absolute failure on every possible level. There's just so many things wrong with these books, but the most unforgivable sin is this: it is insulting to the reader. The authors seem to think that their readers don't remember what happened in the previous books, nor even remember what happened just paragraphs before, and take it upon themselves to explain EVERYTHING to us. Indeed, there is ENDLESS unnecessary rehashing of various plot points, character motivations, basic concepts of the Dune universe, and even reminders of what the various factions such as the Bene Gesserit and Honored Matres even represent, in the most dull and stilted dialogue possible. Characters are constantly explaining themselves and their situations to each other (and, by proxy, to the reader), a tactic that the elder Herbert never stooped to. Part of the allure of the previous Dune novels was that there were giant leaps of logic and intuition presented to the reader, which still managed to make sense and only increased in richness upon re-reading. Hunters of Dune and Sandworms of Dune dispense with this altogether, and instead we're presented with a writing style that's somewhat akin to micro-managing boss: telling you exactly what's going on at all times, with no room for interpretation nor imagination.

These books' other failings are described in much greater detail in other reviews, so I won't bother with re-hashing those here. I will pile on my hatred in a more general fashion: the writing style, while purposefully (and wisely) different from Frank Herbert's, is a huge drop in sophistication from the previous 6 novels. Hunters and Sandworms seem to be written for an audience of 10 year olds. The characters that were once rich with individual traits are reduced to nothing but names and only the most basic motivations. The good guys are good, the bad guys are evil, and not one of them bothers with a single moment of true introspection. Even the long awaited Enemy, whose identity was only hinted at in the Frank Herbert novels, is a huge let-down in this regard. Worse, the characters that we have come to know in the previous books, who are supposed to be the culmination of the best characteristics of the entire human race - leaders of incomparable genius, some gifted with prescience, some gifted with super-human physical qualities - are reduced to complete and total morons. None of them can figure out even the most obvious situations without having it explained to them in mind-numbing detail. There is no pretense of high art here: word choice is extremely limited, as if a Thesaurus is something B. Herbert and K. Anderson have never heard of, and the writing style is clunky, stilted, and repetitive. Unnecessary (and stupid) plot lines and characters are introduced, given short shrift, and then completely abandoned. It's just really, really bad writing.

I committed to reading these, as I was curious about the 30 page outline that Frank Herbert had left behind, which was to supposedly wrap up a story arc that had run the course of thousands of years and untold manifestations of Duncan Idaho gholas. It was a colossal disappointment, in every possible way. It seems funny (not funny in a "haha" kind of way) that Frank Herbert had supplied an apt metaphor, in that a pearl of his vision lurks beneath the surface of these books, much like how the God Emperor's consciousness lived on in his sandworms. I struggled through these books, trying to read between the lines of horrible prose, unremarkable characters, and idiotic plot in an effort to see what Frank Herbert had originally envisioned for his Golden Path. Sadly, all I found was insult piled upon insult. This was NOT the way to continue Frank Herbert's legacy. This is a disgrace.

Hilarious Kangaroo

Dull, like reading synopsis. No life, no caring about characters. It is nice to know what happens, but like reading an obituary, just the facts

Awene

While *Hunters* continues the story imagined by Frank Herbert according to the notes, the narrative begins to unravel into a rather odd series of crazy events. *Chapterhouse* definitely seemed to set the framework for a change of course but even in that book Herbert seems to have jumped the shark. This continues the sprawling bizarreness. You'll read this book if you want to see what the full arc of the Dune story is. I'll say I wish I'd remained in the dark.

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