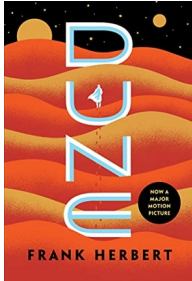




Lambda Sci-Fi

DC Area Gaylaxians



Dune
By Frank Herbert
Discussed January 2001

Discussion Questions

1. Did you enjoy this book? Why or why not?
2. When people think of Dune, they think of a long book. Yet, the paperback copy is about 500 pages - not particularly long by today's standards. Did you find the book a long read? Were you engaged, or did the story drag?
3. What are the major themes of this book? Religion, ecology, coming of age?
4. The image of a nomadic desert people living where an item crucial to the rest of the known universe has some resonance with earth history. Where might Herbert have found his source inspiration for this? What of other elements in the book?
5. Dune is considered a seminal work of Science Fiction. Do you think it's a great work of Science Fiction? Do you think it's dated (it was written in 1965)? Do you feel it deserves the attention it still receives?
6. Baron Harkonnen is obviously gay. Does his sexual orientation add or deter from his villainy? Are you offended?
7. The Bene Gesserit are a hated (but tolerated) religious sect. Do they represent any real life religious groups, such as the Jews in 15th century Spain, who were despised but needed by the Christians?
8. How successfully did Frank Herbert create a world that is alien to ours? Do you believe that humans can successfully live on a planet like Arrakis?
9. While telling the story of a peoples= struggle for survival on Arrakis, Dune also tells the story of several factions struggling for dominance; the Emperor, the Great Houses, the Bene Gesserit, and the Spacing Guild. Were these different groups believable? How successfully did Herbert weave their struggles into the book?
10. Did you see either the David Lynch theatrical version of Dune, or the mini series on the Sci Fi Channel before or after you read the book? If so, did this change the way you read the book or saw the films? Did it help or hurt?

11. For those who have seen the movie or mini series, how do you think they compare to the book? Did they faithfully adapt the source material? Did they improve it? What elements did they leave out? What elements did they focus on? Do you think Herbert would have approved of these decisions?