Dune

Dune is set far in the future amidst a sprawling feudal intergalactic empire where planetary fiefdoms are controlled by noble Houses that owe allegiance to the Imperial House Corrino. The novel tells the story of young Paul Atreides, heir apparent to Duke Leto Atreides and scion of House Atreides, as he and his family relocate to the planet Arrakis, the universe's only source of the spice melange. In a story that explores the complex interactions of politics, religion, ecology, technology, and human emotion, the fate of Paul, his family, his new planet and its native inhabitants, as well as the Padishah Emperor, the powerful Spacing Guild, and the secretive female order of the Bene Gesserit, are all drawn together into a confrontation that will change the course of humanity.

Messiah

Twelve years after the events described in Dune, Paul Atreides rules as Emperor of the Known Universe, following Muad'Dib's Jihad which he unleashed by accepting the role of Mahdi to the Fremen. While Paul is the most powerful Emperor ever, he is ironically powerless to stop the lethal religious excesses of the juggernaut he has created.

Although sixty billion people have perished, Paul's prescient visions indicate that this is far from the worst possible outcome for humanity. Motivated by this knowledge, Paul embarks on the Golden Path, a complex and perilous plan to set humanity on a course that will not inevitably lead to stagnation and extinction, while at the same time acting as ruler of the Empire and focal point of the Fremen religion.

Children

It takes place nine years after the events portrayed in Dune Messiah. Set within an Arrakis dealing with the loss of Muad'Dib and a changing green environment, Children of Dune follows the Atreides twins Ghanima and Leto II and their rise to power. It also follows the conflict between the Lady Jessica and Alia Atreides, who is now possessed by the memory-consciousness of the long dead Baron Vladimir Harkonnen.

God Emperor

3,500 years have passed since Paul Atreides became the messiah of the Fremen and the Emperor of the universe. His son, Leto II, sees the path his father Muad'dib saw, a future that avoided the extinction of human life.

That future, however, required the ultimate and monstrous act of selflessness of becoming a metamorphic vector between primate and worm. Leto II accepts the mantle of godhood from the Fremen and begins to transform himself into a monster of the desert, a sandworm, that has dominated the ecology of Arrakis for millennia. Leto, now confident that his Golden Path — a course into the future in which humanity's survival is guaranteed — is now secure, wants an opportunity to remove himself from the Golden Path.

Heretics

1500 years have passed since Leto II's reign ended; humanity is firmly on the Golden Path. By crushing the aspirations of humans for 3,500 years, Leto caused The Scattering, an explosion of humanity into the unknown universe upon his death.

Now, some of those who went out into the universe are coming back into the realms of the Old Imperium, bent on conquest. Only the Bene Gesserit perceive the Golden Path, and are faced with a choice: keep to their traditional role of hidden manipulators, quietly easing tensions and guiding human progress while struggling for their own survival; or embrace the Golden Path and push humanity onward into a new future where humans are free from the threat of extinction.

Chapterhouse

The Bene Gesserit still find themselves questioning the Golden Path of humanity set by the God Emperor. Now they must survive the Honored Matres, whose reckless conquest of the Old Empire threatens the Bene Gesserit's survival. The Sisters must reassess their timeless methods: does ultimate survival go beyond calculated manipulation? Is there greater purpose to life than consolidating power?

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Quotes:

Polish comes from the cities; wisdom from the desert.

-Arrakeen villager saying

My father once told me that respect for the truth comes close to being the basis for all morality. "Something cannot emerge from nothing," he said. This is profound thinking if you understand how unstable "the truth" can be.

-from Conversations with Muad'Dib by the Princess Irulan

You cannot back into the future.

-Usul/Paul-Muad'Dib

“Without change something sleeps inside us, and seldom awakens. The sleeper must awaken.”

-Duke Leto Atreides

“Arrakis teaches the attitude of the knife - chopping off what's incomplete and saying: 'Now, it's complete because it's ended here.'

- from "Collected Sayings of Maud'Dib''

“I am like a person whose hands were kept numb, without sensation from the first moment of awareness - until one day the ability to feel is forced into them. And I say "Look! I have no hands!" But the people all around me say: "What are hands?”

-Lady Jessica

“The price we paid was the price men have always paid for achieving a paradise in this life--we went soft, we lost our edge.”

-from "Muad'Dib: Conversations"

“My brother comes now," Alia said. "Even an Emperor may tremble before Muad'Dib, for he has the strength of righteousness and heaven smiles upon him.”

-St. Alia of the Knife

“I never could bring myself to trust a traitor,” the Baron said. “Not even a traitor I created.”

-Baron Vladimir Harkonnen

“The universe is full of doors.”

- Thufir Hawat

“It was mostly sweet," he whispered, "and you were the sweetest of all.”

-Paul Muad-Dib

“*I succumbed to the lure of the oracle*, he thought.   
And he sensed that succumbing to this lure might be to fix himself upon a single-track life. Could it be, he wondered, that the oracle didn't *tell* the future? Could it be that the oracle *made* the future?”

-Paul Muad-Dib

“To know a thing well, know it's limits; Only when pushed beyond its tolerance will its true nature be seen.

-The Amtal Rule”

“When I am Weaker Than You, I ask you for Freedom because that is according to your principles; when I am Stronger than you, I take away your Freedom Because that is according to my principles.”

Born in Tacoma,Washington in 1920, Frank Patrick Herbert, Jr. left a troubled home at the age of eighteen to live with his aunt and uncle in Salem, Oregon. Although, he graduated high school, he never finished college, preferring instead to only study the subjects that interested him. Lying about his age at nineteen, Herbert took a job as a newspaper reporter.

In 1940, he was hired as a reporter and photographer for the Oregon Statesman. Before being given a medical discharge, he spent six months in the United States Navy as a photographer during World War II. In 1940 he married his first wife and had a daughter, Penny. They divorced in 1945. He married his second wife, Beverly, in 1946. They were both writers studying journalism at the time. The two went on to have two sons, Brian, who later continued the world of Dune, and Bruce, who was a photographer and gay rights activist.

During the 1950's Herbert became interested in the environment and Zen Buddhism. His beliefs influenced his writing a great deal. When he contrived Dune, Herbert was researching the Oregon Dunes for an article. He gathered so much information, that he decided to write a book instead. Herbert's method of world building and science fiction with a bent towards environmental change was unheard of at the time. His book was awarded two of the highest awards for writing, the Nebula, and the Hugo. At the time, science fiction covered technology and space travel, but Herbert deliberately left out as much of the technology as she could, and instead, concentrated on ecology and character development.

Although none of his prior and subsequent work reached the notoriety of Dune, most of his books afterward have been on the best sellers list. He continued to tour and lecture on ecology, general studies, and interdisciplinary studies. He also worked as a consultant in Vietnam and Pakistan on social and ecological impact in 1972. Herbert even spent some time in 1973 as a director and photographer for a television show called, The Tillers, a documentary done in Vietnam and Pakistan.

Frank Herbert passed away in 1986, in Madison, Wisconsin, at the age of sixty-five. He was one of the greatest science fiction novelists of all time. He was revolutionary in his ability to build a completed world in his works. His world building of Dune was so complete that his son was able to continue the world after his death by translating his notes.