

TITLE: DUNE

DATE 9/11/84

FILM VIDEO

DISTRIBUTOR: UIP

EXAMINERS:

FIRST RESUB

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: U.S.A.

CATEGORY: PG

CUTS ? NO CUTS

GENRE: SCI FI FANTASY

REPORT BY:

ENGLISH LANGUAGE SUB-TITLED DUBBED

FOR BOARD DISCUSSION

APPROPRIATE CATEGORY:	Uc	U	PG	15	18	R18	CUTS	REJECT
THEME		✓						
TREATMENT			— —					
VISUALS: NUDITY		-						
SEX		✓						
VIOLENCE			— —				?	
HORROR			— —				?	
LANGUAGE			✓					
DRUGS			-					
CRIMINAL TECHNIQUES			-					
LEGALITY: OBSCENITY								
CHILDREN								
ANIMALS								
BLASPHEMY								
FILM AS A WHOLE			✓				?	

SYNOPSIS AND COMMENTS:

Based on Frank Herbert's classic sci-fi novel and imbued with director David Lynch's very personal trademarks this is a visually impressive Gormenghast of a film. The plot is stripped down to essentials; as in 'Star Wars' it is basically good forces versus evil forces, but like Tolkien the characters are drawn from a mythical history so that the first scene-setting explanations are highly complex background detail. Plot: The planet Arrakis; inhabited by the Fremen, is a desert waste and only useful for the spice Melange which is mined by the House Atreides on behalf of the other ruling Houses - the Guild. Melange has cosmic properties which make its consumers impregnable. A plot is launched against House Atreides and their miners come under attack from the evil Baron Harkonnen, acting on behalf of the Guild. Duke Leto Atreides is killed, but his son Paul and wife Jessica escape. They ally with the Fremen to defeat Harkonnen, and when the film ends Paul is the acclaimed leader of Arrakis and its people. (for further details see the 500 page novel!). The effects are spectacular in scale and conception, relying less on the technological trickery and laser-zapping of 'Star Wars' than on the dank clanking gloom of 'Alien' - Lynch's trademarks we all love. Steam escapes

from dark industrial sets and Baron Harkonnen's face is an eruption of boils and blisters ('Eraserhead'). The details of the technology are consciously antiquated, while the uniforms are a mixture of Czarist Russia and the fetishist world of rubber - Palaces and space ships owe more to Egyptian archeological designs and decorations than to High Tech.

Inevitably the atmosphere and the special effects - the talking brain with vaginal lips of a mouth (Guild Navigator) and the huge half-mile-long Worms, are capable of inducing wonderment or fear in a young audience—restrained though the horror is, and there is very little overt horror, the atmosphere and images are conducive to the raw material of nightmare images.

The most unpleasant sequence is that where Harkonnen is being drained of fluid through a needle, and then turns on a young boy - pulling out his heart valve and clutching him parasite like - with the leer of a homosexual rapist, before devouring the youth off-screen. I felt that this exceeded the 'PG' which - in the light of 'Star Wars' sequel decisions - this film could get. Similarly the sight of the man with his ear sewn up and face distorted (same sequence) also seemed to be a sadistic detail out of phase with the rest of the film. It puts Harkonnen's evil on a much more adult footing. As if Disney's Wicked Witch would have to don SS uniform for the 1980s, rather than content herself with a crimson poisoned apple. I think we should consider trimming this sequence since as in "Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom" it introduces a horror convention into a film otherwise suitable for a 'PG' audience.