



Eragon

Christopher Paolini

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Eragon and the fledgling dragon must navigate the dangerous terrain and dark enemies of an empire ruled by a king whose evil knows no bounds. Can Eragon take up the mantle of the legendary Dragon Riders?

When Eragon finds a polished blue stone in the forest, he thinks it is the lucky discovery of a poor farm boy; perhaps it will buy his family meat for the winter. But when the stone brings a dragon hatchling, Eragon realizes he has stumbled upon a legacy nearly as old as the Empire itself. Overnight his simple life is shattered, and he is thrust into a perilous new world of destiny, magic, and power. With only an ancient sword and the advice of an old storyteller for guidance, Eragon and the fledgling dragon must navigate the dangerous terrain and dark enemies of an Empire ruled by a king whose evil knows no bounds. Can Eragon take up the mantle of the legendary Dragon Riders? The fate of the Empire may rest in his hands. . . .

Eragon Details

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Author : Christopher Paolini

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From Reader Review Eragon for online ebook

J.G. Keely says

Standard fantasy fare, except that while most fantasy authors lift their plots only vaguely from a previous author, Eragon is simply the plot of Star Wars with a Lord of the Rings paintjob:

Princess flees, trying to keep precious item out of the evil emperor's hands. Boy finds item. Bad guys burn down his farm and kill his uncle. Old mysterious man helps him, and turns out to be part of a secret order of knights to which boy's (now evil) father belonged. Gives boy father's sword and takes him (eventually) to princess, then dies tragically. Boy learns how to fly X-Wings (er, dragons) and goes to take on his father and the evil emperor, &c., &c.

Paolini also resembles other fantasy authors by denying that he is a fantasy author, instead imagining that he is a great literary talent. In his own words:

"In my writing, I strive for a lyrical beauty somewhere between Tolkien at his best and Seamus Heaney's translation of Beowulf"(1)

Unfortunately, his control of language is more akin to a piece of Harry Potter fanfic. There are some days that I wish my parents ran their own publishing company, too. However, if such a boon would require me to write as obliviously as Paolini, I would have to decline.

Yeah, I know he was eighteen, but so was Byron when he wrote "Hours Of Idleness" and Pope when he wrote his "Essay on Criticism". If Paolini doesn't hesitate to compare himself to (what he sees as) literary greats, I certainly have no problem with letting my criticism fall with equal weight on his little bit of fluff.

I think the reason I keep returning to Pulp writers like Robert E. Howard is that those authors just wanted to write exciting stories instead of the next 'literary event'. Authors who lack pretension often write very good stories, because they aren't forcing themselves to write overblown, overly-complex stories. Many modern fantasy authors do the opposite: they write redundant escapist yarns and then get upset that no one considers them to be literary greats, yet.

There is nothing new or interesting here for anyone who has read fantasy before--it's just a rehash of old cliches. The writing, pacing, and characterization are substandard. I wasn't surprised to find that a teen boy wrote this book--it's exactly what I would expect a teenage fantasy fan to write.

My Fantasy Book Suggestions

Cait • A Page with a View says

I hadn't read this in a super long time, so it was fun to come back to. This is still one of my favorite YA fantasy series! The writing is a bit clunky at times, but then I remember that the author was only a teenager when he wrote this and everything becomes straight up impressive.

Yes, there are obvious Tolkien influences (~~Aragorn~~ Eragon, ~~Arwen~~ Arya the elf, the urgal/uruk similarities,

and a lot of other names)... but I kind of like it when authors can create entirely new worlds that are inspired by material I already love. Besides, this book is waaaaay more than just LOTR with dragons. The whole world is gorgeous, incredibly detailed, and has stuck with me just as clearly as Middle Earth, Hogwarts, or Narnia.

But oh my goodness: DO NOT LISTEN TO THE AUDIOBOOK. Saphira sounds like a deranged Yoda. I don't even know what that narrator was doing...

PS: the movie totally butchered this book and I am still disappointed.

Nataliya says

Here is a short list of things I find more enjoyable than reading *Eragon*:

Why does this book read like it was written by a fantasy-obsessed 15-year-old? Oh, nevermind... **Is THAT why is has EVERY single one moth-eaten fantasy cliché???**

It's like Paolini actually, in all seriousness, used Diana Wynne Jones' humorous *The Tough Guide to Fantasyland* as a real technical manual on how to create the *Eragon* universe. *And the proud parents of a budding "new Tolkien", instead of proudly allowing him to read it out loud at family gatherings, decided to publish it and unleash it upon the world.*

*

LEFT - the ride that this story promises to take you on. RIGHT - what you actually get.

The only way to actually enjoy *Eragon* is if you have never encountered a single fantasy-related story in your life (and that includes "Star Wars", by the way). Let's have a roll call for the clichés, shall we? A mysterious talented orphan/poor farm boy? *Check*. Dragons? *Check*. Elves and dwarves? *Check*. Stew? *Check*. Ancient sword? *Check*. The weird apostrophe-ridden names (save the protagonists, of course?) *Check*. A quest? *Check*. ~~Hot chick~~ Damsel in distress? *Check*. And it goes on and on and on... Wait, you say, maybe Paolini was deliberately paying homage to the traditions of the fantasy genre. Fine. I suppose that could explain some of it. But still, **blindly and straightforwardly rehashing of the old tropes without adding much originality IS NOT OKAY, okay?**

I think that the writing is immature and betrays the author's young age and lack of experience. Throughout the novel, Paolini clumsily brings our attention to anything that he considers important to the story with constant reminders and brick-sized hints. **Foreshadowing should be subtle, but I don't think he quite grasps that concept.** The descriptions are trying too hard to be Tolkien-like, but fail at this miserably. His attempts at creating accents and dialects are pathetic. There were quite a few instances when I had to shake my head muttering, "I don't think this word means what you think it does". **The prose is stilted and quite irritating while trying to be overly pretentious.**

OH, I SEE...

The characters are flat and devoid of any believable personality, with shallow and simplistic motivations that

only exist to move the plot forward. The interactions between them are far-fetched and forced. The protagonist (Paolini's version of Luke Skywalker), absolutely marvelous at so many cool things with minimal training (every child's dream) is there for the reader to self-insert into the story. The *deus-ex-machina* bits replace so many actual solutions in this story that no amount of eyerolling would suffice. **And the plot holes - the story is so full of those there's barely any plot left at all.** As for the worldbuilding - well, he stuffs it with every imaginable fantasy trope, as I mentioned before. Ughhhh. **And yet at the end nothing is memorable.**

"Wind howled through the night, carrying a scent that would change the world."

The first sentence alone should have stopped me from reading this book. I should have reorganized my sock drawer instead.

Why did I read it if I hated it, you ask? Simple answer - I was bored and this was the only book within reach. I would NOT recommend it to those who are familiar with the fantasy genre. **Actually, scratch that - I would not recommend it to anyone. 1 star.**

M. Weaver says

EDIT: Re-wrote/fixed up this review on 8/21/2012 to reflect my changes as a critiquer/reviewer

Right so. I'll just say it: I hate Paolini's work. To my very core. I don't really think it's so much the "he stole from Tolkien/Lucas/Gandhi/God/my dog..," though whoever may say this has a point. Even though he blatantly took ideas from pioneers in their respective fields, that isn't what bothers me the most.

When I was fourteen, I admired him out of mere jealousy. I was absolutely green with envy that he could publish a book at age fifteen and receive any kind of acclaim. But in retrospect (and nearly vomiting as I attempted to get through a chapter of *Eldest*, which I failed at miserably), I realized that I had no reason to envy Paolini at all. He doesn't know how to write. String together a vague semblance of a story? Possibly. But at the end of the day, the description is purple, the dialogue is stilted, and the character development is next to non-existent.

For starters, has anyone noticed that he is obsessed with stating distances? Something like, "Two feet away stood three troops of fifty, in rows of five, making ten people per row" is a sentence uncannily close to one I read in the actual book itself. This kind of information is superfluous and distracting, taking away from important aspects of a novel such as character development--which, by the way, he integrates next to none of. Who *is* Eragon? I seem to have forgotten everything about him, other than the fact that he is creepily obsessed with a woman who has no interest in him, he acquires fighting skills incredibly fast (read: Mary Sue red-flag), and only reprehensible villains disagree with him. Basically, he's perfect, and he only gets even more amazing at everything he does. Where is the fun in a character like that?

I do, however, remember Murtagh... a little. Probably because he's the only one who changes at all as a character throughout the book, other than the occasional insight into Eragon's personal airplane--I mean, pet dragon--I mean, companion, Saphira. Even her characterization is sacrificed because she's used as a plot device by Paolini rather than fleshed out as an actual character. None of the characters are memorable and the main character is my least favorite character of them all! How are we supposed to root for the main character when he is nothing but an arrogant snot, constantly reaffirming a holier-than-thou attitude to everyone around him?

The plot is a cliché hero's journey that has been done before, and *better*, might I add. Where's the appeal in that? Answer: there is none.

What left is there to hold in high regard? His world building skills? False. I don't know why he decided that his world of Alagaesia had to have EVERY single climate condition imaginable, but doing so made his world seem juvenile, fake, and forced. Not to mention boring judging by the awful over-description of said world. With regards to the language he "created"? He mostly ripped from old Norse words. He's admitted to it himself. Look, *anyone* can string a bunch of letters together and call it a language. But Paolini hasn't a single clue when it comes to linguistics. And hey, I'll admit that I don't either. But I also don't try to create my own languages--that I more or less steal--and claim that I created all by myself. Seriously, Paolini's alleged arrogance (based on interviews I've seen/read) disgusts me.

All in all, sure, it's fantastic that he published a book at such a young age, but are we as a society lowering the bar that much as to celebrate mediocrity? The man is now twenty-eight years old and his successive books *Eldest*, *Brisingsr* and finally, *Inheritance* are decidedly much worse than his first book on every front. That he wrote *when he was fifteen*. This is a huge problem in my eyes. Someone so unwilling to grow or change like any other writer should have their title of "writer" stripped from them. It's insulting.

Petrik says

Age of the readers and how well acquainted they are with the high fantasy genre seriously need to be considered here.

I don't think I need to say a lot on my review on this, Eragon is a very popular book and it's been quite mixed received, to say the least. The majority of love and dislike usually depends on when did you read the book for the first time? If you were still a child or teenager, and haven't read a lot or any high fantasy books yet, you'll probably love this. Unfortunately, I'm reading this for the first time as an adult who's already well acquainted with the genre.

Anyone who has read or watched Lord of the Rings or Star Wars pretty much has read this book, Eragon almost a straight copy of these franchises with different names and terminologies. And that's okay, especially considering that the author was 15 years old when he wrote this book. However, as someone who has experienced the high number of tropes in this book out of all medium, it was hard for me to enjoy the book.

Eragon is not a bad book, by all means, it's just a book that in my opinion will appeal more towards children or teenagers; it's something that I will definitely recommend to younger kids. If I was reading this 15 years ago, it could've been one of the books that introduced me to this genre and I know it, in fact, did for a lot of people. This is something I will always praise Paolini for. I don't care what kind of books or genre you read, if the book sparked your love for reading a genre, that gets a praise from me and Paolini did it for countless readers.

"Books are my friends, my companions. They make me laugh and cry and find meaning in life."

I wasn't planning to read Eragon in the first place but I received this book from one of my good friend, Dorina, as a birthday present because she wanted me to have this book that made her become the reader she is today and for that, I thank you very much, I will cherish this book. Although this book didn't really work out for me, I can totally see why it's beloved by a lot of readers, especially younger readers. In the future, Eragon could be a book that I'll consider giving to my kids to spark their love for reading.

You can find **this** and the rest of my Adult Epic/High Fantasy & Sci-Fi reviews at **BookNest**

Katerina says

Before we get started

-Please, **please** do not judge a book by its movie.

-I read Eragon for the first time when I was 15 years old. I've re-read it 5 times since (I didn't own many books back then so after I took advantage of my neighbor's and my cousin's library, I kept re-reading my poor collection) and every time I loved it just the same, because it was the book that **introduced me to the world of fantasy**.

The story

When I got this beauty in my hands, I thought that Eragon was the dragon (laugh all you want, I deserve it). But it turns out Eragon is the teenage boy who finds the dragon named Saphira and together they are the only ones who can fight the powerful and corrupted tyrant Galbatorix. With an old storyteller as his mentor, Eragon travels in Alagaesia, finds dwarves and elves and rebels and embraces his heritage and his responsibility as the last Dragonrider, the protector of the weak and the only hope of an oppressed people.

“Keep in mind that many people have died for their beliefs; it's actually quite common. The real courage is in living and suffering for what you believe.”

Reaction of 15 years old Katerina

Reaction of 23 years old Katerina

You get the picture.

Thoughts

I know there is a great amount of readers who found this book boring and slow paced and nothing special. Maybe if I read it for the first time as an adult I would agree, maybe I wouldn't. But as things turned out, this is the first book that took me away in uncharted lands, it was my Brom to the fantasy world. I know by heart the ancient language, I still use the dwarven curses (and it is very satisfactory), I still look at it with great affection and love. Eragon could be immature but it is expected from a teenager, and there were so many interesting and vivid characters, like Brom and Murtagh and Arya and Roran and Orik. The world building is fascinating, and there are **epic battles** and **ancient swords** and deaths and **magic** and **prophecies**. It is a wonderful journey to embrace one's destiny and purpose.

“Books are my friends, my companions. They make me laugh and cry and find meaning in

life."

And that's exactly what Eragon is. I can't guarantee that you will like this book, but you should give it a chance to bewitch you and make you a Dragonrider!

Sé onr sverdar sitja hvass!

J.Elle says

I cannot adequately express my complete and utter loathing for this book. I was working at a library during the time that this book was being published and had access to a galley of the novel. I did finish it, but only so I could know (entirely how much) Christopher Paolini (the supposed 16-year-old author-genius) had plagiarized J.R.R. Tolkien's "Lord of The Rings" trilogy. If you are not familiar with the Inheritance books, allow me to inform you:

Lord of the Rings: Trilogy

Eragon: Trilogy

Lord of the Rings: a main character Aragorn

Eragon: main character Eragon

Lord of the Rings: Aragorn's love interest is Arwen (the daughter of an elf king)

Eragon: Eragon's love interest is Arya (the daughter of an elf king)

Lord of the Rings: bad flying things are Ringwraiths

Eragon: bad flying things are Ra'zac

Lord of the Rings: there is a big fight in the troll dungeons

Eragon: there is a big fight in the troll dungeons

I could continue... suffice it to say, after reading "Eragon" I classified it as "Lord of the Rings" with a dragon. This is definitely not worth anyone's time, unless you want to amuse yourself by noting how many similarities there are between the trilogies.

Addendum: WOW! Thanks for all the comments. This is, by far, my most popular review. I'm glad to know others share my feelings for this pitiful excuse of an imaginative novel.

Addendum 2: If you, like so many others in the comments, find fault with my apparent ignorance and wish to correct me regarding the fact that this series is not a trilogy, please see comment #53.

Addendum 3: I can't even. I just can't. Do you know how many people have commented on the fact that this isn't a trilogy since I added Addendum 2 SPECIFICALLY addressing that? I don't even know how many because I've lost count. What does this teach us? It teaches us that people don't read. Let that sink in.

Julio Genao says

appalling.

as if written by an enthusiastic but tragically over-encouraged teenager with insufferably supportive parents who somehow happen to be well-connected in the publishing indus—wait.

...oh.

carry on, then.

Brownbetty says

Two or three years ago, everywhere I went there was some display attempting to sell me *Eragon*, by Christopher Paolini. It was obviously a bad book without opening the cover: the back cover carries a quote from the book, and an endorsement by Anne McCaffrey, and I'm pretty sure I could get that woman to supply a blurb for a double mint wrapper to the effect of "I couldn't put it down! An author ... to watch for!" The quote is "Wind howled through the night, carrying a scent that would change the world." Please note, the author has just claimed that the world is going to be changed by a smell. Which would actually be an interesting book, sadly, not this one. I know this, because that quote is the first sentence of the book, and what the author means is "Wind howled through the night, carrying a scent giving warning of the coming of persons who would set in motion events that would change the world." I know, it lacks a certain something.

Better the eighty percent of the pit of voles, but still, undeserving of being published.

I do not blame Paolini for writing a bad book. People write, and sometimes, they write badly. But I do blame the editor, and his publishing house. This book is crap, and it should have been obvious to anyone who read it. The main character's most interesting bit of characterization and only vestige of personality is that he collects rocks, and this is only mentioned in one paragraph. He's a transparent sue. Everyone acts as if they have just acquired their motivations and history on a 3x5 card before walking on for their scene.

The plot is a clumsy clunker that is foreshadowed on page 22. He has never known his father, and his mother refused to answer questions about him! Do you think this will turn up again later? His name is Eragon. Like dragon, but with an E. An old man pops in to tell what in a better novel would be suspiciously appropriate myths and folktales every time Eragon needs to know what is going on.

Descriptive sections are often incomprehensible, as for example, "His hand was numb, his fingers paralysed. Alarmed, he watched as the middle of his palm shimmered and formed a diffuse white oval." The only reason I know what the author is intending to say there is because I have read enough fantasy to recognize the Mystical Mark.

Our hero makes decisions that make no sense, simply because they are necessary to move the plot forward. Obstacles like hiding a dragon from those living in your house are hand waved away in two paragraphs. Things that oughtn't be obstacles, like buying groceries, are, just to build sympathy with the protagonist by inserting baseless discrimination.

Why publish this!? Were they incapable of finding something more deserving? Was this book even edited? Is he someone's nephew? Publishing this book is an insult to readers and a disservice to writers everywhere, including Mr. Paolini. It's like telling someone they look great when they have spinach in their teeth. Dammit!

Ben Alderson says

seriously, Ben. Why have you not read this sooner. This beast has been sat on your TBR pile for years. What is wrong with you? Was little Ben intimidated by the size?

I FINALLY READ THIS BOOK
and
breath

I honestly think this is one of the best fantasy YA stories. Such a classic!

ERAGON YOU ARE MIGHTY FINEEEEEEE

Miranda Reads says

I could read this one a hundred times and love it just the same.

This was *my* middle school book series. I read it over and over and over (and, as you may have guessed, over and over...).

It had dragons! And elves and magic and swordplay and not a love triangle in sight.

Even rereading it as an adult, I just...**cannot separate** all those happy memories So keep in mind, my review ~~might be~~ is more than a bit biased.

Eragon, a farm boy, stumbles upon a **suspicious blue stone** while hunting in the Spine (an area that few would go to even in the best of times). He loses sight of his prey but brings home the stone anyway figuring that **he might sell it**.

However, once folks find out it's **from the Spine** - they refuse to touch it. Begrudgingly, Eragon takes it home only to discover, a few short days later, that the stone is not a stone...**it is an egg**.

A dragon egg.

And while Saphira (his young dragon) is cute for the first few weeks...Soon, Eragon realizes that keeping a dragon, even a young one, **is no easy task**.

When a **tragedy befalls** Eragon's family, he sets off with Brom, a local storyteller, and Saphira on a **quest for revenge**.

Along the way, he meets both **friend and foe**. He travels far farther than he ever dreamed possible and experiences losses that will irrevocably change him.

Nothing is more dangerous than an enemy with nothing to lose, he thought. Which is what I have become.

Rereading this as an adult, there are a few things I picked up this time around - like how Eragon is always **just strong enough** to vanquish his enemies, how he is always in the **right place at the right time**, how he's able to pick up swordplay and magic at an unbelievable speed...

And yet...

There is one thing that 11-year-old me and 25-year-old-me would absolutely agree.

One thing that remains steadfast and true.

I will defend this book to my dying day. This book is simply the best. The best of the best.

Audiobook Comments

While the *book* may be the best of the best...this audiobook (narrated by Gerard Doyle) was not. In particular, Saphira's voice was absolutely, hands-down, **the worst voice ever bestowed upon a dragon**.

I could understand going for a deeper voice for a dragon, but she's a young, female dragon, not a crotchety 1000-year-old creature with a chip on his shoulder. It was painful to listen to. Over 10 hours of a deep, guttural flem-in-the-back-of-your-throat sort of voice - think yoda on steroids.

Blog | Instagram

Emily (Books with Emily Fox) says

This was straight up painful...

Full review to come!

Swankivy says

A short (and somewhat sarcastic) summary: Main character = Eragon, mysteeeeerious boy-child left with his aunt and uncle by wandering mother, father unknown. Boy finds mysteeeeerious stone. Turns out to be dragon egg. Boy raises dragon and bonds with it strongly. Bad guys come and destroy boy's house and kill his uncle. Boy swears revenge. Boy's secret dragon is discovered by mysteeeeerious storyteller who turns out to be master swordsman and random magic user. The hunt for the bad guys begins, and boy searches for his destiny as a legendary Dragon Rider (of course, that must be capitalized). Eragon goes through traditional bouts of training and learning about himself under the stern tutelage of old wise traveling companion. Along the way he gains and loses friends, and rescues a mysteeeeerious woman from a horrible dungeon while never straying from his quest to put right all that is wrong in a world oppressively ruled by an evil king.

This book has gotten lots of attention since it first came out, partly because the author is so young. He was fifteen when he started the book, and was nineteen when it was published. Age isn't always correlated with mastery, of course, but when I read this book, I could TELL that the writer was either young or an immature

writer. Though it seems people think it "got published" somehow because of its great merit, this book was actually self-published by the author's parents (company was Paolini International), and then it was paraded around on a self-funded signing tour the way most self-published people do. An established author happened to run into the family doing a signing while he was on vacation, thought a kid writing a book was interesting, bought a copy and made his stepson read it, and decided to try to get the book a deal when the kid liked it. The people at Knopf re-edited and repackaged and re-released it under that label. I believe that if this book had meandered its way to publishing houses the usual way, it would have been rejected as unpublishable, for reasons I will discuss in depth here.

Christopher Paolini himself, in his own words, describes his story thus: "Eragon is an archetypal hero story, filled with exciting action, dangerous villains, and fantastic locations. There are dragons and elves, sword fights and unexpected revelations, and of course, a beautiful maiden who's more than capable of taking care of herself."

I would argue that this book is not an "archetypal hero story" so much as an overused and overly traditional Tolkienian "epic," with "epic" in quotes because it lacks exactly that epic nature that made the world of Lord of the Rings so rich. There was absolutely nothing new or "unexpected" in this book (though the author claims there are "revelations"), and if a reader is excited by this book, they are probably reacting to the concepts themselves (e.g., fantasy worlds, dragons, fierce battles) rather than the book's own merit, or perhaps they have never been exposed to the dozens of fantasy and science fiction epics from which this author pulled his influences. My feeling was that this book was nothing special because, if I may be so blunt, "it's been done," and it's been done better.

Overall, I just think that this book was written as though it had a template or blueprint for "traditional fantasy novel" and the details and names were simply filled in. I couldn't help feeling the entire time I was reading it that I had read this story before, nothing was much of a surprise, and things that didn't make sense or got in the way of a conflicting original vision were smoothed over with excuses or deliberate muddling of motives. I think that in order to write something so traditional, a writer needs something special, a unique twist or slant, and this just hasn't got it. (In other words, I'm not saying that writing an "archetypal fantasy epic" is BAD; I'm saying that it needs to not be a rehashing of overused themes that have been done to death by classic writers.) The boy and his powerful companion having an intimate relationship? Done, in everything from Anne McCaffrey to freaking *Digimon*. The hero quest to punish the baddies and bring the good guys back into power? Done, in *Lord of the Rings* and *Star Wars*. Lush descriptions of landscapes and surroundings? Done by Tolkien of course, but more as a background to action rather than in stagnant heaps of detail. Mysterious companions to whom there is more than meets the eye? I don't even want to think about all the books and movies that have done that. I can't pick out a single thing that this book has that has never been done before, the characters didn't interest or capture me, the storytelling was riddled with too many attempts to be grand that I was just entirely turned off by it.

Some specifics about the bad writing style:

Every imaginable permutation of the word "said" is used. If the reader cannot tell how someone is saying something by what they are saying, it is likely that the dialogue has been written sloppily. "'You're not thinking,' admonished Brom." Yes, that is an admonishment without you telling us so. Leave it out. "'Get on with the story,' he said impatiently." Well, if one person is urging another to get on with it, it stands to reason that it's being said impatiently. Running into "'Sorry,' apologized Brom" made me cringe. The fact that Brom said "Sorry" means that he apologized, so use "said." You can deviate from "said" if for some reason HOW the sentence is said is not obvious, such as volume ("he whispered") or intent ("he said sarcastically," if it isn't obvious that that's a sarcastic comment anyway). Leave out the decorations because they're tacky. The

speech tags are not the part of the writing that is supposed to be interesting, so don't distract us; believe me when I say that if you do it, nearly any editor will consider it an early warning sign that you are an amateur.

Unnecessary description is inserted with maddening frequency. I am not usually a reader of traditional fantasy, and traditional fantasy does tend to be more flowery than the hard stuff, but either way random descriptions should not just be thrown into the mix. Eragon is waking up and stretching. Suddenly we get a description of the items on his night table, including the random information that he likes to look at one of the objects on it frequently. In the meantime, while we are getting this rush of information, Eragon is putting on his shoes. He then does not proceed to touch, pick up, or look at anything on the night table, and none of it is ever mentioned again. Also, people and places just get sudden paragraphs of description. We're fighting an Urgal and all of a sudden . . . drop some description on us. While he's rushing at Eragon with drooling fangs, no less. By all means, describe the fangs, slipping the adjectives in gracefully. But don't give us a run-down of a typical Urgal when we're a lot more interested in whether those fangs are going into Eragon's head.

And lastly, too many words, phrases, and concepts seem to be entirely lifted from other well-known works. Word choice seemed as though it was the author's attempt to use all his SAT words; it was verbose and flowery as if on purpose, trying to impress with vocabulary that would have been better used sparingly. The similarity of some people's and places' names to those of Tolkien have not gone unnoticed by seasoned fantasy readers; I have heard several people call this book "Aragorn" without even noticing that they weren't saying it right, not to mention things like Ardwen (compared with Arwen), Isenstar (compared with Isengard), and Isidar (compared with Isildur)--and there are a LOT more. A ridiculous number of phrases seem to be something I've heard before, though I'm not sure where; for example, near the beginning someone is touching a wrapped package repeatedly, "as if to reassure herself that it was still there." I mentioned this to a friend and said, "That's FROM something." He replied, "It's FROM everything!" Far too often, ridiculously overused or clichéd similes and metaphors are used, such as tears being described as "liquid diamonds." It is less like this book was written and more like it was sewn together from the torn apart products of others, like some old quilt on which the stitches are showing. (How's that for an original simile?)

There's definitely not enough space in this little box (which has a character limit) for me to go into as much detail as I'd like talking about how bad this book is, so if you really want to read my ranting in all its entirety, you might want to check out my essay about it on my website.

James Trevino says

Dragons and elves and dragons!

A lot of people faulted Paolini for trying to copy Tolkien, but the truth is, their styles are nothing alike. Tolkien is much more poetic and his writing more archaic.

Paolini is a much more straightforward fantasy guy. And that is not a bad thing. I really enjoyed this book and the series overall ranks as one of my all time favorites! Why? Because it is so well written! Seriously now, the descriptions and characters and everything! And it is fascinating really... well, except for the Prologue of this book. It is like that is written by another person (or by Paolini while he was 10 years old). But once you go past that, it gets soooo damn good!!!!

Faith says

I LOVE the Inheritance books. I had never heard of Christopher Paolini before, and was walking through Barnes and Noble when I saw this book on the end display. What caught my eye was the dragon on the front cover (I love dragons, and my "artistic eye" was captivated by the artwork). This is a great fiction/adventure/fantasy novel. Anyone who is a Lord of the Rings would truly have an appreciation for this book. I was hooked from the moment I picked up this book and began reading. The story begins with a young farm boy, named Eragon, from a small village. While hunting in the wilderness in search of food for their family, Eragon comes across a rare stone (which is later revealed to be a dragon egg). He takes it home with him and to his surprise the egg hatches and out comes Saphira. The two are instantly connected as a Dragon and Rider making them inseparable. Once Saphira is big enough to fly they set out to seek revenge for the death of Eragon's uncle who was murdered. This is just the beginning of their journey throughout the land battling mysterious, evil forces. A very good book to cuddle up with on a cool fall day or during the winter when you need a good adventure to bring you out of being stuck in your house.
