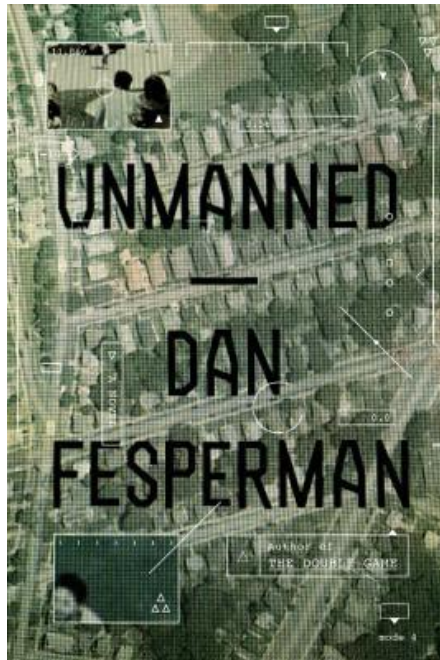




# Unmanned

*Dan Fesperman*

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## Unmanned Dan Fesperman

From the widely acclaimed author of *The Prisoner of Guantánamo* and *The Double Game*, an electrifying, timely, psychologically gripping descent into the hidden, expanding world of drone warfare.

Not very long ago, Darwin Cole was an F-16 fighter pilot. He was a family man. He was on top of the world. Now? He's a washout drunk with a dishonorable discharge from the U.S. Air Force, living alone in the Nevada desert and haunted by an image beamed from one of his last missions as a "pilot" of a Predator drone—a harrowing shot of an Afghan child running for her life.

When Cole is approached by three journalists trying to uncover the identity of the possibly rogue intelligence operative who called the shots in Cole's ill-fated mission, Cole reluctantly agrees to team up with them.

But in our surveillance culture, even the well intentioned are liable to find themselves under scrutiny, running for their lives, especially when the trail they're following leads to the very heart of that culture—in intelligence, in the military, and among the unchecked private contractors who stand to profit richly from the advancing technology . . . not merely for use "over there," but for right here, right now.

## Unmanned Details

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Author : Dan Fesperman

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## From Reader Review Unmanned for online ebook

### Randy says

Quite a fun read, an interesting look at the burgeoning field of drone flights and the implications for domestic surveillance. Can anybody say "Big Brother is watching you!"

Darwin Cole once piloted F-16 fighter planes. Then he was moved to piloting drones from outside of Las Vegas. An incident, a royal screw-up in the Middle East, has him spot three children when it was too late to stop it.

Cole went to pieces, got a dishonorable discharge, lost his family, and ha him living alone, with no power, in an old trailer. And mostly drinking.

When three reporters find and convince him to help find the shadowy figure that screwed up his mission, it launches a fast moving thriller that kept me turning the pages,

Good read.

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### John Addiego says

This was a plausible and chilling thriller about drone warfare and defense contractors, a bit reminiscent (for me) of the movie Eye in the Sky. The main character is a sympathetic drone pilot with a conscience and a fairly scrambled mind due to guilt and PTSD. Fesperman serves up suspense and surprises as well as a humane perspective that seems unusually well-developed for an espionage story.

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### Christopher Culp says

This is Fesperman's worst book to date. The concept (i.e., potential abuse of drones for domestic surveillance) was intriguing. Unfortunately, the characters were cardboard and/or not interesting, and the plot was contrived and clichéd. This was a disappointing book from an otherwise great author.

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### Judith Baller-Fabian says

This is a very interesting and diverse author. The first book I read by him was Lie in the Dark, and the action was in Sarajevo during the war in Yugoslavia. From that point on, I read every book he's written. This one is a humdinger and is written around the use of drones. I can only say, if you read this book, you will find yourself looking up and scanning the sky more than you ever did before. Terrific read as usual? Bravo, Dan Fesperman.

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### Joe says

I found it relatively difficult to get through. The writing was decent enough but the story wasn't compelling for me.

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### **Susan Watrous says**

Intense read. Interesting info on drone pilots and flights Had finished the Double Game a few days earlier which I found more compelling

His plots are strong with many characters, physical locations, and action

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### **Judy Green says**

UNC=

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### **Robert says**

A UAV pilot takes a mission he is involved in very personal and burns out causing his demise and dishonorable discharge from the USAF. Something about the mission does not sit right with him and bothers him even in his personal exile. When contacted by some independent reporters looking into the very same mission he decides to look for the truth. Sometimes the truth can have some pretty sharp teeth and just might bite back. A very nicely done story with a lot of different intelligence agencies playing off one another and twisting the story round and round. For anyone interested in what the whole drone program is about, and the very real and scary places it is going, this is a sure fire hit.

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### **Washington Post says**

Dan Fesperman's "Unmanned" is a timely novel about aerial drones and their sanitary means of execution. Fesperman implies that these supposedly "surgical" weapons cause a great deal more "collateral damage" — such as the opening scene when a missile is launched at a suspected terrorist gathering that later proves to be a wedding party — than Americans realize, and there is no question that burnout is common among those who operate them.

Readers who view drones as a valuable military asset may be angered by Fesperman's dark view of their potential; others will be concerned by issues of safety and privacy he raises. Either way, "Unmanned" — a title with several meanings — is an exciting story, expertly told. My only complaint is that novel's ending may be more optimistic than the available facts justify. We'll see.

Read our review here: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/enterta...>

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### **John says**

Slightly disappointing by Dan Fesperman's very high standards, not because of any shortfall in the standard of the writing, but because I did not find the story as moving as his other books that I have read. The lead character is well drawn, but most of the others are rather shadowy, possibly the emphasis on the technology deflects from them. We are very much in the "why are we in Afghanistan" zone and the book raises questions about wars being fought simply to develop weapons. Fesperman is a writer I will continue to follow, but expect a bit more of next time.

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### **Monica says**

It's a techno thriller that makes looking over one's shoulder or up in the sky (or maybe up the chimney) for invisible drones seem like a prudent thing to do. Darwin Cole, ex-fighter pilot, ex-drone pilot is haunted by the sight of a young girl he thinks was killed in one of his drone strikes. He falls apart, drinks too much, separates from his family, and is living alone in a trailer in the Nevada desert when he is tracked down by three journalists trying to find out the real story behind the drone attack. Was it ordered by a rogue agent now disappeared?

The tangled web of interagency rivalries and betrayals (both government and private contractors) gets pretty complicated and at points it looks as though everybody is out to get everybody else. And maybe it's true. If one wasn't disheartened and a bit paranoid before reading this book, one will be after.

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### **Jerry Peace says**

Timely. Touches on the incestuous relationship between the military and security and weapons companies, all of whose flourishing existence depends upon continuous warfare. Characterization a bit light and the ending gets rushed along, but a worthwhile read. As I read, though, I couldn't help thinking that the last fifteen years has been one long technological laboratory, with Afghans and Iraqis and now Syrians as cheap guinea pigs for arms manufacturers and merchants.

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### **Michael says**

"Unmanned" tells the story of what might happen to a person whose mistake caused others to lose their lives.

The psychological novel tells of Darwin Cole, a F1 pilot who is reassigned to be a pilot in the Predator Drone Program. He's given a target by a man who states it's a HVT - high value target. After Cole sends the missile on its way, he views a young Afghan girl running from the building that was the target. The next scene shows the death and destruction of the surrounding area.

Cole has a daughter about the same age as the Afghan girl and he becomes haunted by his deed. He begins drinking heavily, goes AWOL and his wife takes their children and leaves him.

He's discharged from the Air Force and lives in a trailer in the desert.

One day a reporter comes to his trailer and asks him to join her and two other journalists. They are looking for the man who ordered the drone strike to hold him accountable for his actions. However, this man has

disappeared and some say he's gone rogue.

Cole joins the group and speaks to a number of people to get information about this man. At the same time, Cole is being hunted by a man who is ordered to find him and then determine his fate.

Generally in a thriller, I look for suspense, good action and drama. I enjoyed Dan Fesperman "The Prisoner of Guantanamo" which was an award winner. However this book doesn't measure up to the other books I've read from the author.

I look forward to the next book by Fesperman and hope there will be characters who are more interesting and are people I'd like to know more about.

I received this book for my review.

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### **Michael Martz says**

'Unmanned', Don Fesperman's supposed fast-paced techno-thriller, lost me about halfway through when I realized its caricatured main characters and confusing cast of government, private, semi-government, contractor, and assorted other involved persons were creating a mess that was far from fast-paced. I didn't find the descriptions of the technology to be all that interesting, Fesperman's writing was tolerable but his dialogue was awful, the plot was OK at a high level but falls apart in the details, and the conclusion was totally unrealistic. Other than that, it was OK I suppose....

I 'discovered' Fesperman via his recent 'Safe Houses' spy thriller, one of my favorites of this year, and thought I'd be able to reach back into his catalog for others of similar quality. So far, it's been hit or miss and Unmanned was a real miss.

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### **Devyn says**

I received this book from goodreads.

I've never read a book about drone warfare before and am pleasantly surprised that I enjoyed it.

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