

PKD a modernist?

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 27 Oct 1999

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Ron Hale-Evans — 27 Oct 1999, 16:39

At 03:45 AM 10/27/99 -0400, you wrote:

Well, I'm sort of astonished that there's so much interest in this subject, but it's a kick, too. I'll add a couple of thoughts. I mentioned -Catch-22- as "pop modernism." I'd like to add to that category the oeuvres of Kurt Vonnegut and Philip K. Dick. Vonnegut was an interesting writer, early on. He's become a lazy hack, and I think it's great that he's announced his "retirement," since I don't want to read any more of his books. Dick was a hack too, but I think he could be counted among the more interesting pop modernists. I confess that I never could read much of him either. (One of the conditions for joining the club seems to be relative unreadability.) His post-mortem elevation is certainly a phenomenon.

alga, to label Dick as a modernist writer is barely comprehensible to me. To me he has always seemed a, if not the, quintessential postmodernist writer. As for his being a hack, remember what Stanislaw Lem said of him: that he brought gold from the trash. PKD may have been a hack, but _qua_ hack, he was a great artist.

And I find him also compulsively readable. But I guess you have to have been there...

ObWolfe: I wonder if Lem would today revise his opinion that PKD is the only great contemporary SF writer if he read Wolfe. Or Egan.

Ron H-E

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