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The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 14 Dec 1999

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Peter Stephenson — 14 Dec 1999, 23:44

urth-errors at lists.best.com wrote:

Is it the duty of the FAQ to initiate one into the "mysteries" of TBOTNS?
Or to initiate one into the method of reading Gene Wolfe?

Neither. A FAQ is a list of frequently asked questions and their answers. It is a device invented to prevent people from posting the same question over and over in a newsgroup (at which task it has generally been a notable failure) and to relieve other people from having to reply with the same answer over and over or ignore the question (at which task it is a fair success; of course the response, "read the FAQ" must be posted over and over, but this is a lot less effort).

Hmmm. I don't think this is entirely appropriate with Wolfe. If you look back in the archive I think you'll find we have had the same question over and over, and each time with different answers embedded in a completely different discussion. I certainly wouldn't want to think the questions shouldn't be asked again, nor that `read the FAQ' would ever be an adequate response to anything more than the simplest question. And from the other discussions recently, that doesn't even seem to include `who is the author'.

(A propos of which, I can't resist the following, but please feel free to stop reading now.)

From: "Jonathan Laidlow" <LAIDL@hhs.bham.ac.uk>
(and by the by, Barthes wrote 'Death of the Author')

But how do we know that Barthes `wrote' it? And what do we mean by `write' anyway? etc.

corncrake

Ron Hale-Evans — 14 Dec 1999, 16:09 · follows Peter Stephenson

At 11:44 PM 12/14/99 +0000, you wrote:
From: "Jonathan Laidlow" <LAIDL@hhs.bham.ac.uk>
(and by the by, Barthes wrote 'Death of the Author')

But how do we know that Barthes `wrote' it? And what do we mean by `write' anyway? etc.

corncrake

He didn't -- I did. The edition I'm bringing out has my byline on it as proof. :-)

Seriously, for all that the Continental critics claim the author is dead, you don't see them refusing money and fame for their work. It is copyrighted, and if someone plagiarised one of these critics as I just proposed to do, the critic would undoubtedly sue him; conclusions about the integrity of the Continental critics are left as an exercise for The Reader.

Ron H-E

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