

Pratchett

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 14 Apr 2000

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Craig.Christensen — 14 Apr 2000, 13:41

I have heard that Terry Pratchett has a habit of cramming his books with clever references to other books and authors. Most are too clever for me to catch, but this one in *Carpe Jugulum* made me think it might be a nod toward Wolfe and the Long/New Sun books.

"On one shelf alone he found forty-three remarkably similar accounts of a great flood, and in every single one of them a man very much like Bishop Horn had saved the elect by building a magical boat."

Jack and Melissa Holcomb — 14 Apr 2000, 21:18 · follows Craig.Christensen

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In my experience, Pratchett's parodies of anything and anybody are anything but subtle -- although as with any parody, you need to have at least casual familiarity with the original in order to "get it." Here, though, I think you may be working too hard to see something that isn't necessarily there. It seems far more likely that Pratchett and Wolfe were working from the same source material -- which is, after all, anything but esoteric. (My kid has one version of it memorized, after all.)

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Maybe. The library thing, more than the flood, seems suggestive -- but libraries aren't exactly rare in fantasy lit, either. I'd say the dozens of versions of the flood myth (many remarkably like the story of Noah in the Hebrew Scriptures, especially those from the Near East) seem like a more obvious source of this jab.

Haven't read *Carpe Jugulum* yet -- but Terry Pratchett is one of my secret vices. He's the one writer I've read who actually makes humorous fantasy work, probably because he doesn't rely on puns to carry the story. He writes genuine and interesting characters. He's head and shoulders above the competition -- Piers Anthony and Robert Asprin leap to mind -- who seem to be writing mostly for thirteen-year-olds with fair reading skills and underdeveloped taste.

Jack