

Lotsa Stuff

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 21 Aug 2001

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Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 21 Aug 2001, 09:43

boy, go away for a week and see what happens...

Questions asked about Hamilton's "Night's Dawn" and answered quite thoroughly. The one thing I would add: not for (a) the weak of stomach (there are some scenes very worthy of Clive Barker) or (b) those who are easily offended by the theologically incorrect, so to speak. This is decidedly not a Christian book, if you follow me, but my Ghod what a read... which leads me to something that will have to be a separate post.

Gene Wolfe's favorite Nero Wolfe novels: I admit that FER-DE-LANCE is relatively weak. I disagree about THE BLACK MOUNTAIN, but its strength is most apparent in a serial reading (or rereading) of many Wolfe books, because it's simply different from the others in some deep and radical ways, and provides a kind of relief from them. And his "best" list is excellent but leaves out what is surely my all-time fave, TOO MANY COOKS, probably the funniest of the bunch.

The "Notes toward a Lupine Aesthetic": Fabulous. Excellent "intro to Wolfe" fodder.

Alga: You wrote, "...I am unalterably hostile to Lewis for what he did to Susan." I came across Lewis rather late, maybe in my teens or 20s, and never forgave him for that cool, thoughtless misogyny."

Now, I wonder what in that is misogynistic? He had decided, apparently, that one of the characters had to "fall away," if only to show the possibility of "falling away." Who, then? Eustace and Polly, as the primary "children" in this novel were non-candidates. Digory/The Professor had already been shown as still "believing in Narnia" in adulthood.

Of the four, original Lucy, of course, is the primary hero of the series, and to have Edmund fall away would waste much of the impact of his redemption. That leaves Peter, Susan, and Polly Plummer; of these, Peter is probably the worst choice, because of his symbolic value as the High King (a Messianic "figure"), leaving the two women. And Susan had been portrayed (in PRINCE CASPIAN) as a bit of a grump and doubter -- viz. her reaction to Lucy's sighting of the Lion in the wood, which is distinctly different from Peter's and Edmund's.

I wondered, later on, if Joy, his wife, ever tackled him on that.

Well, quite aside from whether or not Susan's falling-away is "misogynistic," which I think can come only from the assumption that anything done to a woman must be done from sexist

motives, I can refer you to Lewis' late novel (which he considered his best), TILL WE HAVE FACES.