

revelatory appeal

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 28 May 2002

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maa32 — 28 May 2002, 16:20

Well, this revelation/renewed appeal has happened for me with a ton of Wolfe's stuff. I'll be honest: I didn't get *Peace* or the *Fifth Head of Cerberus* or *The Book of the Short Sun* the first time through - and I hated *Return to the Whorl* the first time I read it. Now, after me tree revelation, (which I claim responsibility for, but the challenges and comments (especially of Nutria) helped me to polish into a theory) made me believe that *TBOTSS* was not only great, but that it was my favorite book in the whole world. I love to read it at random now - because it always confirms my grand unifying theory (no matter what you dudes say - and one or two people actually believe me).

The reason for this is simple: Wolfe always seems two steps ahead, but when I get something he writes I feel like a genius. In other words, I feel that you really do have to come to a key realization worked into the text on your own to appreciate them; I don't know many other authors who do this so successfully. In a way, to love a work of fiction by Wolfe is to love your own ideas; he reaffirms my faith in my own mental processes and gives me hope that there really is someone out there who thinks like me.

I will say this: I had a hard time reading *Peace* the first time, and now that I get it, it is fun to read. I will make this distinction: Zelazny's *Chronicles of Amber* were fun to read the first time through, and I read them every couple of years just because they were fun and they are still fun. Wolfe's texts may not have been fun to read the first time through, but they become ultimately much, much more fun for me everytime. I really do like them more. A lot more. I love them; I foist them on my friends; I read them to my mother; I serve as a one man propaganda army; I caress them everyday. A few years ago they just sat on my shelf with the rest of the books.

Marc Aramini