

Extended Meditation on Rorschach Novels (was RE: (urth) Coldhouse Banshee)

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 27 Aug 2002

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3428>

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William Ansley — 27 Aug 2002, 19:32

The question that I asked above then breaks down, in this terminology, into three separate but deeply interrelated questions, as follows: (1) For a given lacuna, or a given _type_ of lacuna, can we reasonably assume that Wolfe himself had some specific content in mind? (2) If so, can we reasonably assume that he expected his readers to extrapolate something similar to what he imagined? And if not, was he even aware of the lacuna when he wrote?

Is "And if not, was he even aware of the lacuna when he wrote?" your 'question number 3' or have you supplied us with a lacuna of your own? <G>

William Ansley

Andy Robertson — 27 Aug 2002, 17:08 · follows William Ansley

----- Original Message -----

From: "Dan'l Danehy-Oakes" <ddanehy at siebel.com>
I looked a post about the coldhouse prank and the Banshee story, and saw a correspondence I'd never seen before -- that, to the best of my knowledge, nobody had ever seen before. Did Wolfe put it there? Consciously or unconsciously? How could we even know? Wolfe wrote the book thirty years ago; chances are he doesn't know at this point.

Writing is like all other ways of dealing with reality.

Ultimately, you know, we write our own narrative of life: we create our own book, as we live, perceiving this and ignoring that. We form our own reality.

Which is why, I think, we are able to read books at all.

Writing good stories is a matter of **subtracting** everything unnecessary from the tale. But so is remembering. So is understanding. So is perceiving, even - in this whirlwind world we are endlessly forced to filter out all but the core elements of reality.

And so a story that is written down may consist **only** of those core elements and may work very well.

This is how a thread of ink conjures up a universe.

How does Wolfe attain his unique effect? By going just a little further than others.

In his stories, the process of memory and storytelling (they are the same process, actually, they are the thing we all do) has gone on a few steps further, a few layers deeper.

It has become dream, metamemory, vision . . . Wolfe.

But it is still organically the same thing, recognisably the same thing. It feels right. It is what we all do, all the time.

And this is why he is so good.

hartshorn