

Geography of Urth; GW's Author list; Disclave

The Urth list — 3 messages, 3 voices, 05 Feb 1998

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David_Lebling — 05 Feb 1998, 21:21

Tony Ellis:

I can do the C word! In _Citadel_, ch. 37, Severian sees for the first time a river or stream flowing north and east. "All streams, in my previous experience, ran south or southwest..." I recall something more explicit, but can't find it right now. In any case it is clear that the continental divide runs from northwest to southeast, not north-south right at the coast as it does in our South America.

On the question of whether evolution stops when civilization is achieved; I doubt it. If you buy into "punctuated equilibrium," you will see that species go through long periods with nothing much happening, then a rapid burst of evolution, and so on. Taking care of the sick and weak may effect somewhat the distribution of certain genes, but others can spread through humanity in a surprisingly short time. Evolution requires differential reproductive rates for different genetic makeups; the fallacy that that means the sick and weak have to die off is just that, a fallacy.

The polychrome sand isn't where you suggested (I just looked), but it's somewhere, because I remember it distinctly, too...

Nutria:

I've read _The Deep_, which I found very enigmatic at the time. A rereading might shed more light. I think _Engine Summer_ is the most Wolfean and (dare I say it?) accessible of Crowley's books.

Vance has had plenty of airing here, so I don't think there's much need to discuss him. Powers is one of my favorites, too. His most recent, _Earthquake Weather_, is the culmination of a (fairly loose) trilogy. I personally like _The Stress of Her Regard_ and _The Anubis Gates_ best, although _Last Call_ (book one of the recent trilogy) is pretty good, too.

Powers has been compared to Leiber, and there's some justice in that. I was about to say his books are darker, but they aren't (only the Fafhrd and Gray Mouser stuff of Leiber's is really light in tone). He does pretty creepy contemporary and semi-contemporary fantasy better than anyone. The legend of the Fisher King is a recurring theme.

The only Park I've read is _Celestis_, and I couldn't get beyond the "call a rabbit a smerp" aspect of it as a post-colonial novel. Maybe I'll try some of his other stuff.

Terry Bisson also wrote _Pirates of the Universe_, which was recently issued as a trade pb. It's great; funny, touching, beautifully written. I liked it much better than "Bears Discover Fire." On the other hand,

St. Leibowitz and the Wild Horse Woman is, I think, only for those who loved _Canticle for Leibowitz_ (which I did); it's very slow going. I don't know how much of it is Bisson's and how much is Miller's. The intent is the same, in that both are about individuals finding their faith, but while this is only part of _Canticle_, it is almost all of _St. Leibowitz_.

alga,

Disclave: Wow, what a great idea. I don't know if I have any chance of making it, but if I don't I'd love to read the transcript!

CRCulver:

New Sun: It's worse than that, because it's also stated that other autarchs than Ymar and Appian(?) considered taking the test, but feared that the Ascians would benefit more from a New Sun than the Commonwealth, and hence demurred. But then, stating that the Conciliator will rise again as the New Sun doesn't necessarily imply that someone else can't have a hand in bringing it.

-viz

(david_lebling at avid.com)

Joshua A. Solomon — 06 Feb 1998, 13:12 · follows David_Lebling

David_Lebling at avid.com wrote:

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Don't all the rivers in the delta region of Buenos Aires run south or southwest?

bee

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Michael Straight — 09 Feb 1998, 08:16 · follows Joshua A. Solomon

On Fri, 6 Feb 1998, Joshua A. Solomon wrote:

David_Lebling at avid.com wrote:

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How often does the earth's magnetic polarity reverse? Often enough to have happened between our time and Severian's? Do you think Severian's "North" is magnetic North or "true" North?

-Rostrum