

On Pedophilia and Homosexuality

The Urth list — 15 messages, 7 voices, 21 Jul 2010

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5671>

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Nicholas — 21 Jul 2010, 16:35

Wolfe tends to use classical Christian and Greco-Roman perceptions of nature. As such there wouldn't be a great (and very post '70's) chasm between homosexuality and pedophilia. Badlanders in such an understanding is very interested in the attention of men (not so much "gay" as that is a modern construct). He's interested in men because they are like him and he is his own idol.

Seen in this light _all_ men have a tendency to be sexually attracted to other men in some degree. Severian notices this, groks it, rejects it, and then accepts his first taste of Father hood. He loves as a man rather than an adolescent (in a moment that reminds me of Marcus Aurelius' reflections on the matter). That is he learns to love another rather than the image of himself, even through loss. Little Severian therefore prepares him to sacrifice for the good and further separates him from Badlanders.

Gerry Quinn — 21 Jul 2010, 17:04 · in reply to Nicholas

From: "Nicholas" <nickjost at yahoo.com>

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I don't see where you get this from. Granted Baldanders is not shown as having any sexual interest in women, and by default one might assume that such a character might (or might not) be gay. But the modified child in his bed hardly qualifies as a man.

- Gerry Quinn

brunians at brunians.org — 21 Jul 2010, 18:31 · in reply to Nicholas

Very interesting.

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Lee Berman — 22 Jul 2010, 03:18 · follows brunians at brunians.org

Here are the suspicious circumstances to me on this issue in BotNS-

1. Conspicuously absent is mention of homosexual activities among the members of the guild. From prisons to Greek armies to British boarding schools, such behavior is rather well-known in such isolated all-male settings but it is not mentioned here.

If this was *Lord Of The Flies* (1954) leaving such a thing in subtext but unspoken would be understandable. But this story describes some pretty bizarre sexual situations, from grandmotherly incest to sex with alien beings. Why avoid all mention of this thing?

Severian would have us believe he had no sexual thoughts or activities before age 20 and his meeting of Thecla, the House Azure, etc. I wonder about a few mentioned items, such as the fear the apprentices have of the Witches Tower and how Master Gurloes fears he will not be able to perform when ordered to sexually abuse a woman. Severian suggests the beast handler guild is similar to his own, and they each take an animal in marriage. What do the torturers do? I don't get the impression Master Gurloes frequents the House Azure.

2. Severian becomes sure the Old Leech has a pedophilic interest in his 13 year old assistant because of an unsolicited denial of it.

3. Severian gives us an unsolicited denial of sexual play between himself and Little Severian. I always think to myself at that part, "actually, Severian, I never considered the possibility....until you brought it up".

4. Also odd is Severian's conversation with a Pelerine about the loneliness of soldiers and their need for a sense of authority.

Pelerine- "Some, of course, form bonds with others in the ranks. Sometimes several share a single woman or a man who is like a woman. Some make pets of animals, and some befriend children left homeless by the struggle"

Severian- "Remembering Casdow's son, I said, 'I can see why you object to that'.

Pelerine- "We do not object- most certainly not to that, and not to things vastly less natural".

Severian is known as an unreliable narrator, but on this topic I think he could be especially unreliable.

Ryan Dunn — 22 Jul 2010, 03:25 · in reply to Lee Berman

On Jul 21, 2010, at 11:18 PM, Lee Berman wrote:

Severian would have us believe he had no sexual thoughts or activities before age 20 and his meeting of Thecla, the House Azure, etc.

He sure knows surprisingly well how to initiate fellatio from the false Thecla in House Azure. Just sayin'.

...ryan

brunians at brunians.org — 22 Jul 2010, 03:40 · in reply to Lee Berman

It's real easy to suppress the nonconsensual aspects of such behavior if you are willing to beat the kids.

I imagine the queer kids fucked each other, the hetros fucked the witch girls, the special guys like Sev and his buds got a free pass to a seriously classy whorehouse.

You know he didn't just go to the whorehouse once.

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Jerry Friedman — 22 Jul 2010, 03:40 · in reply to Lee Berman

From: Lee Berman <severiansola at hotmail.com>

Here are the suspicious circumstances to me on this issue in BotNS-

1. Conspicuously absent is mention of homosexual activities among the members of the guild.

So true.

From prisons to Greek armies to British boarding schools, such behavior is rather well-known in such isolated all-male settings but it is not mentioned here.

If this was Lord Of The Flies (1954) leaving such a thing in subtext but unspoken would be understandable. But this story describes some pretty bizarre sexual situations, from grandmotherly incest to sex with alien beings. Why avoid all mention of this thing?

Severian would have us believe he had no sexual thoughts or activities before age 20 and his meeting of Thecla, the House Azure, etc.

...

Does he say that, or does he just not mention his sexual thoughts and any activities?

When Roche takes Severian to the House Azure, he warns him not to "strike her or use a grip", because they charge more. Why should it be so likely that a torturer's apprentice would do the same thing in a sexual situation that he does to force the younger boys to obey him? Just askin'.

Severian suggests the
beast handler guild is similar to his own, and they each take an animal
in marriage. What do the torturers do? I don't get the impression
Master Gurloes frequents the House Azure.

I think he might, but the journeymen probably don't go often, and it seems to be unusual for an apprentice to go.

[snipping other interesting points]

Jerry Friedman

brunians at brunians.org — 22 Jul 2010, 03:40 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

One man's fellatio is another man's facefuckery.

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Ryan Dunn — 22 Jul 2010, 03:43 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

...is another teenager's lifetime of sexual oppression.

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John Watkins — 22 Jul 2010, 03:53 · in reply to Lee Berman

On Wed, Jul 21, 2010 at 11:18 PM, Lee Berman <severiansola at hotmail.com>wrote:

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1. Conspicuously absent is mention of homosexual activities among the members of the guild. From prisons to Greek armies to British boarding schools, such behavior is rather well-known in such isolated all-male settings but it is not mentioned here.

How isolated are they?

If this was Lord Of The Flies (1954) leaving such a thing in subtext but unspoken would be understandable. But this story describes some pretty bizarre sexual situations, from grandmotherly incest to sex with alien beings. Why avoid all mention of this thing?

Well, as you go on to show ably, it is mentioned. Which the grandmotherly incest really isn't, actually.

Sex with a hot alien chick fits as well or better in the "pulp sci-fi tropes" aisle as it does in the paraphelia aisle. I don't think most people think of Kirk as a galactic pervert, although of course formally he is.

Severian would have us believe he had no sexual thoughts or activities before age 20 and his meeting of Thecla, the House Azure, etc.

Would he? Does he claim this?

I wonder about a few mentioned items, such as the fear the apprentices have of the Witches Tower and how Master Gurloes fears he will not be able to perform when ordered to sexually abuse a woman.

I can think of several reasons for that unrelated to homosexuality.

Severian suggests the
beast handler guild is similar to his own, and they each take an animal
in marriage.

Unless that's a pun. They're animal husbands.

3. Severian gives us an unsolicited denial of sexual play between himself
and Little Severian. I always think to myself at that part, "actually,
Severian, I never considered the possibility....until you brought it up".

Well, everything he gives us in unsolicited, isn't it? And it does set up
a parallel between him and Baldanders.

4. Also odd is Severian's conversation with a Pelerine about the loneliness
of soldiers and their need for a sense of authority.

Pelerine- "Some, of course, form bonds with others in the ranks. Sometimes
several share a single woman or a man who is like a woman. Some make pets
of animals, and some befriend children left homeless by the struggle"

Severian- "Remembering Casdoe's son, I said, 'I can see why you object to
that'.

Pelerine- "We do not object- most certainly not to that, and not to things
vastly less natural".

The boy may have had a sexual liason with Severian. He was certainly incinerated. Are the
soldiers who take a stray animal as a pet presumed to be engaging in bestiality? That seems to
me to be a forced reading.

Severian is known as an unreliable narrator, but on this topic I think he
could be especially unreliable.

The one thing that ought to be said in favor of this theory is that he's running around with
Thecla's memories and really her soul--not her hormones, as the homunculus points out, but
her will and desire can rise up in Severian. Maybe she's the one who wanted to bang little Sev.

brunians at brunians.org — 22 Jul 2010, 03:57 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

And so it goes, on Urth as on Earth.

The World is a certain way.

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...is another teenager's lifetime of sexual oppression.

...ryan

On Jul 21, 2010, at 11:40 PM, brunians at brunians.org wrote:

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Jerry Friedman — 22 Jul 2010, 05:07 · in reply to Jerry Friedman

I wrote:

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When Roche takes Severian to the House Azure, he warns him not to "strike her or

use a grip", because they charge more. Why should it be so likely that a torturer's apprentice would do the same thing in a sexual situation that he does

to force the younger boys to obey him? Just askin'.

Actually, this is not a good argument, since Severian asks whether people do that and Roche says that "amateurs" (is that how the Guild thinks of non-Guild sadists?) do. I'd say it's still possible to read the passage the way I did, but much less likely.

Jerry Friedman

brunians at brunians.org — 22 Jul 2010, 05:35 · in reply to Jerry Friedman

The members of the guild are not generally sadists.

What gives you the impression that they are?

They are professionals.

Professionals don't by and large do these things for entertainment.

Do corrections officers hold their children prisoner? I imagine some do.

Parents that are not corrections officers do too sometimes.

I am certain that all do not.

The guild training is designed to turn out human beings who are not inherently corrupt in this way.

Palaemon states this explicitly.

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I wrote:

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