

Seven American Nights explanation wins "award"

The Urth list — 9 messages, 6 voices, 25 Aug 2010

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5727>

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Dave Tallman — 25 Aug 2010, 22:07

For what it's worth, my forgery explanation for "Seven American Nights" (as posted on the WolfeWiki) has won a "2010 Pulitzer Prize for Commentary" on the waggish blog. He found it a most satisfying explanation.

Here is the link: <http://www.waggish.org/2010/08/10/gene-wolfe-challenge-won/>

David Stockhoff — 25 Aug 2010, 22:15 · in reply to Dave Tallman

Congratulations!

Too bad there's no grant attached. You've done some really good work here.

Dave Tallman wrote:

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Urth Mailing List

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Jack Smith — 25 Aug 2010, 22:45 · in reply to Dave Tallman

Congratulations.

On Wed, Aug 25, 2010 at 6:07 PM, Dave Tallman <davetallman at msn.com> wrote:

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Mo Holkar — 26 Aug 2010, 08:07 · in reply to Dave Tallman

At 23:07 25/08/2010, Dave Tallman wrote:

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Good stuff! Having watched closely as you gradually assembled the elements of the explanation, I moved from sceptical to pretty much convinced. Although I should probably now closely reread the story in the light of the explanation, to see if I can see any new problems :-)

best,

Mo

~ # ~

WolfeWiki -- a wiki about Gene Wolfe
<http://www.wolfewiki.com/pmwiki/>

James Wynn — 26 Aug 2010, 12:40 · in reply to Mo Holkar

This is what Mr Waggish said about 7AN in Dec. 2009:

"The multiplicity of interpretations of 7 American Nights suggests to me that no, it will never be figured out. There are too many 'clues' people are finding that Wolfe did not intend; or rather, the real clues are too obscure."

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Lee Berman — 26 Aug 2010, 13:14 · follows James Wynn

waggish- Still, the ultimate plot details are yet again interesting in revealing Wolfe's seemingly strong anti-colonial attitudes once again. America looks even worse than it does on initial reading now that their evil plot is revealed, and Islam comes off as positively tolerant. At least in recent years, Wolfe has been something of a Catholic populist right-winger, and so I find it hard to believe he would write this story today. I would say the same of Fifth Head of Cerberus,

Interesting that 5HoC is invoked on the theme of anti-colonialism. My first thought is that Dave's conclusion is similar to the generally acknowledged solution to the mystery of VRT.

James Wynn — 26 Aug 2010, 14:07 · in reply to Lee Berman

At least in recent years, Wolfe has been something of a Catholic populist right-winger, and so I find it hard to believe he would write this story today. I would say the same of Fifth Head of Cerberus,

Has Waggish read An Evil Guest?

Also, Wolfe has always been a populist right-winger.

Last year at this time I heard him say (as I reported then):

"The form of government I favor is democracy. America is not a democracy and never has been.

We have a republic. That means that every so often we choose people to rule over us. And once we have, you can believe, they know it."

u+16b9

Dave Tallman — 26 Aug 2010, 14:13 · follows James Wynn

Mo Holkar wrote:

Good stuff! Having watched closely as you gradually assembled the elements of the explanation, I moved from sceptical to pretty much convinced. Although I should probably now closely reread the story in the light of the explanation, to see if I can see any new problems :-

Thanks to everyone. I give a lot of credit to the Urth list for challenging my ideas and helping me whip the theory into shape.

DAVID STOCKHOFF — 26 Aug 2010, 15:07 · in reply to James Wynn

Well put.

I'm not sure how SAN is postcolonial, exactly. If anything, it's postrepublican: the government that seizes Nadan no longer has any pretense to being even a republic.

Nadan's presence in the US is more of a simple literary reversal of Orientalism. The story doesn't show the evils of imperialism except as practiced on one's own people, as dictatorship. If a foreign government were supporting that dictatorship, it might be different---but that doesn't appear to be the case. Nadan's tourism reveals those evils, not the evils of submission to foreign empire that allows such tourism as the British once practiced in, say Egypt, though they are superficially similar.

--- On Thu, 8/26/10, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

From: James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) Seven American Nights explanation wins "award"

To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net>

Date: Thursday, August 26, 2010, 10:07 AM

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