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The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 09 May 1998

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Alice Turner — 09 May 1998, 00:00

J.Shultz wrote:

Speaking of this, anyone have any suggestions for further reading.

Hoom. Well, there are a few SF writers out there with literary aspirations and executions as high as Wolfe, or nearly so: Dan Simmons comes to mind, as does Samuel R. Delany. Ursula K. Le Guin -- though she seems less likely to appeal to a Wolfe fan. Tim Powers is not quite as good, but packs a lot of layers of meaning into his work anyway.

A few individual books I've read lately that I can recommend: Matt Ruff's "Sewer, Gas, and Electric," which is almost impossible to describe. A computerized ghost of Ayn Rand is a major character; so is a giant flying shark. If that doesn't grab you, forget it, the book's not for you. If it does -- the book is a major hoot.

Funny this should come up today, as I was just handed a package of sf recommendations, partly done by a group of people, partly by Robert J. Sawyer for a Toronto newspaper and partly printed out from www.sfsite.com/listswhoto01 to whoto07.htm Funnily enough, Gene Wolfe gets *no* recommendation from *any* of them (to exonerate them to a degree, the first thing is called "Entry Level Science Fiction), though in another appendage printed from a book called -Science Fiction Writers Can't Write for Sour Apples- he is one of a list suggested for the classroom. The whoto is one of those "if ya like this guy then ya'll like that one" things. Patrick O'Leary's -Door #3- (hey, Patty, you still out there?) makes it three times: he is akin to O.S. Card, Jonathan Carroll and Charles De Lint, apparently. Er-em--bedfellows?

Anyway, I'm going to edit this down according to mine own tastes and throw out some of what they call "Higher Quality Writing, Ambitious Stylistically or Thematically" (My, Mabel, look at them sour apples). Delaney, Dick, Gibson, Haldeman, Russell Hoban's -Riddley Walker- (I should think any Wolfe fan would love this, actually) LeGuin, Paul Preuss (I've never read him, any comments?), Lucius Shepard's -Life During Wartime-, Silverberg's -Dying Inside-, a couple of James Morrow books and a couple of Connie Willis's.

Oh, now I feel like a creep. I edited out -Timescape- by Benford; -Parable of the Sower- by O. Butler; -The Gate to Women's Country- by Sheri Tepper (I myself have written appreciatively about Tepper, but this is a clunky book). This was for style, not for theme.

Say: what ever happened to the idea of "Wolfe" and "Lupine" lists...

I, for one, think Ranjit made the right decision, to let it lie. This list serves very well for a general freeforall, the other will pick up when the first Short Sun book appears (Jan. '99 from what I hear).

-alga