

(no subject)

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 22 Dec 2011

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Lee Berman — 22 Dec 2011, 19:57

Jerry Friedman: Certainly we're supposed to pick up those aspects. This would all be fine, if it weren't for Wolfe's article in /Thrust/ as quoted in LU: "There are /no/ fantasy elements involved -- no "magic" in the fantasy sense. There is time-travel, but that belongs to sf, not fantasy. There are hypnotism, sleight of hand, and a few other things, but those belong to the world of reality, if not the world of science." (/Thrust/ no. 19, winter-spring 1983)

So my problem isn't with the books but with this quotation. Of course I could just ignore it.

Well, of course you should not ignore it! But I think reading in context is important. By saying BotNS has no "fantasy" sort of magic, I think he is saying there is no Harry Potter/Merlin stuff going on, where magic comes out of a stick with no discernable power source nor recognition that one is needed. The Claw does have a (sort of) explained power source. And the same is true of most other wonders in the Sun Series.

I'm glad you pointed out that Wolfe is quite aware of the deception aspect of some "magic" as well (since I tend to think the inhumani space travel is more deception than magic).

Also, I'm glad you got me steered toward some older Wolfe interviews. The one by Robert Frazier, (found in the collection below) is very interesting, having been done after the first four books of BotNS were published but before UotNS. Wolfe was a bit less guarded back then also.

http://books.google.com/books?id=MkPfjCVo3g4C&pg=PA44&lpg=PA44&dq=Gene+Wolfe+interview+frazier&source=bl&ots=1T2UgDjAyi&sig=xpe_eR1eII2LI7IqK9RkqwygwuA&hl=en&sa=X&ei=uITzTqPnAsfn0QHys9yxAg&ved=0CCYQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q=Gene%20Wolfe%20interview%20frazier&f=false