

shadow of the torturer and thomas co - (nf)

The Usenet list — 4 messages, 4 voices, 21 Jun 1983

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cfv — 21 Jun 1983, 21:14 · in reply to bvi

I seem to have had a similar response to SotT. It took me about 3 months to finish the book, but the first quarter of the book took all but 4 days of it. It was not that I didn't like the book, but it is an involved and thought provoking book and you have to be in the proper frame of mind. If you don't feel like involving yourself in the book, it just doesn't work. I have a similar response to movies: some days I feel like Fellini, some days I feel like the Marx Brothers.

One thing that I noticed (someone out there want to back me up on this?) when reading it was that the feel of the New Sun books was very close to the works of Kafka. As it turned out, I was reading some of Kafka's short works about the time I read SotT, so it might just be a reaction to that, but it almost felt like he was using a work like The Castle as a philosophical base. There is also a lot of classical literature intertwined into the fabric of the story, especially the Greek and Roman mythologies.

I haven't read the Covenant yet. Maybe I should... Is it really a good work?

marick — 24 Jun 1983, 08:52

There will be another book by Wolfe set in Urth.
It will, I believe, be a group of short stories. One Urth story will appear in the World Fantasy Convention program book.

bvi — 27 Jun 1983, 06:34 · follows marick

Hmmm... No, the only correlation between Donaldson and Wolfe that I share is that they're both hard to get into. However, whereas I *forced* myself to finish the 1st Donaldson book, and had absolutely *no* interest in reading any more in the sequence, I found I couldn't put Shadow of the Torturer down once I got about 1/4 of the way into it. It does take a bit of getting used to, because Wolfe writes in a deliberately obscure manner that forces you to use more imagination than most other SF books. I found that Severian and the whole culture portrayed in the book fascinating; I finished SoT in one sitting and ran out the next day to buy the other three books, which I finished post haste. I only wish there were more!

Beatriz Infante

fantods — 29 Jun 1983, 20:17 · follows bvi

Donaldson I can't read, Wolfe I can. Donaldson uses language to obscure and deflate everything--Wolfe seems to somehow make everything more complex and resonant, ecstatically precise. I admit that I couldn't really identify with Severian very much, but I was carried along by other things.

Anything I read by Poul Anderson seems to be a pastiche of greatness, but never quite achieves greatness. Please send me examples of his "great" stuff. I probably

missed it while I was plowing through one or another of his titles picked out at random. He has a lot of them!

Richard