

For Adam and James: Literary Devices, Authorship,

The Whorl list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 06 Mar 2001

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James Jordan — 06 Mar 2001, 13:11

My Dear Blattid,

You've certainly advanced the discussion with fine Points To Ponder.

Thanks.

As to your essay question, well if I grasped what you're asking the answer to the first half is kind of obvious: Wolfe seeks to show us the clumsiness/skill of his narrators at every point. Your observations on the seeming Wolfean clumsiness of the collective-children's 3rd person sections are helpful -- I guess we can hypothesize that the Narrator lived among them for a year or so before leaving for the Whorl, and that much of "their" style is drawn from transcripts of "his" narrations.

And perhaps we can also note the various storytelling episodes in the SS series as well as in Citadel of the Autarch, and see the last parts of RTW as analogous: various voices telling stories.

It is rather interesting how on the one hand Wolfe praises traditional story-telling and literature (i.e., that much great traditional literature is "fantasy"), and on the other hand Wolfe uses a kind of hyper-modern meta-narrative technique in much of his own writing, which has the effect of putting the reader at several removes from the story, and subtly undermines it.

Oh, well, that's our Gene. You have to take the "sweet" along with the "bitter," the wonderful story along with being impelled into literary criticism at the same time!

Patera Nutria

*This is WHORL, for discussion of Gene Wolfe's Book of the Long Sun.

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes — 07 Mar 2001, 16:20 · follows James Jordan

Rather busy & don't have time to reply in detail -- but -- Adam, you seem to be barking up a very odd tree indeed here:

I may be missing something, but I don't get your point here.

Is it stated that Nettle read the book while "Horn" was present?

Ummm... when else could she have read it? The only time for her to read it (and for the children to know she has read it and say so) is after "the Narrator" arrives but before he departs -- because she departs with him. Ergo, he was in New Viron long enough for her to read it.

Gotta scuttle,

--Blattid of the Lupine Vermin Patrol

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