

Alga's complaint

The Whorl list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 07 Apr 2001

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David DiGiacomo — 07 Apr 2001, 15:05

This list has been struggling to find interpretations or excuses for the author but, frankly, I think his editor should have kicked his ass and made him tow the line.

1. Alga, why do you think it's worse than any other Wolfe book? Or are you just tired of his tricks?

2. I wonder how completely David Hartwell feels he needs to understand a Wolfe book before he can publish it. It doesn't seem that he has the luxury of reading through 4 or 5 times and then thinking it over for a while. If he hasn't worked out all the puzzles (or even just the ending), how can he edit effectively? Does he demand spoilers?

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

William Ansley — 08 Apr 2001, 00:57 · follows David DiGiacomo

At 3:05 PM -0800 4/7/01, David DiGiacomo wrote:

1. Alga, why do you think it's worse than any other Wolfe book?
Or are you just tired of his tricks?

I'm not alga, but but I have a similar feeling of disappointment with RttW and I want to address this question too.

I think the best way for me to sum up why I didn't like RttW is that I felt cheated when it was over. I haven't felt that way after reading any of Wolfe's other novels. I have felt a little cheated at the end of some of Wolfe's shorter works, although not to this extent.

Why do I feel cheated? There were just too many loose ends. And the beginnings of most of the loose ends seemed to have no reason for being put in the trilogy in the first place.

What do I mean by "loose ends"? Well, if I had the time and energy (which I currently do not and almost certainly will not) I believe I could make up an impressively lengthy list. To take just one example, the "brother and sister" section toward the end of OBW. Is there anyone here who understands it? Is there anyone here who feels that the book/trilogy is a better work because this passage is in it?

I have enjoyed some of Wolfe's most "puzzling" works, both those in which many of the puzzles seem to have solutions even when I couldn't figure them out (such as Peace) and those in which many of the puzzles seem to have no solution or we are not given enough information to solve them (such as The Fifth Head of Cerberus). RttW however, just left me feeling frustrated.

William Ansley

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