

Fan fic Fooey? Fooey.

The Whorl list — 4 messages, 3 voices, 19 Jun 2001

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/1452>

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Adam Stephanides — 19 Jun 2001, 20:51

on 6/19/01 4:10 PM, Dan'l Danehy-Oakes at ddanehy at siebel.com wrote:
Or pfui. With all due respect to the various people who've
used this term, I'm just about apoplectic from not shouting
at you about it, and now I will.

It wasn't originally my term, and it wasn't a term I would have applied on my own. And I agree the sections aren't literally fanfic. But mantis used the term, iirc, to indicate

- 1) That the third-person sections are fictional, at least in part; and
- 2) That the motive of the fictionizers is to fill in emotionally satisfying bits absent from the original narrative.

The former of these is true, I would argue (see below) and the latter seems likely to be at least partially true for the conversation with Remora, and may well be true of the Whorl material.

Look. Whatever _tBotSS_ is (or the editors-written third-person parts of it, or even "selected bits" of those), it ain't fanfic. The term is specific, refers to the parasitic creation of new stories in a _fictional_ world _created_ by some other person or corporate entity_, on an amateur or not-for-profit basis, and usually (but not always) quite _bad_.

As a matter of fact, on the website I cited earlier for Pullman fanfic, there is quite a lot of fanfic dealing with real people, namely music groups (the vast majority of it on boy bands: there are over five thousand Nsync fanfics).

The best-known, if not actually dominant, forms, are the [erotic|pornographic] "slash" fiction* and the MaryJane.

"Slash" isn't necessarily pornographic or erotica. It posits a romantic or sexual relationship between two characters of the same sex, but need not depict sex.

* The concept of / fiction in the Lupiverse has its own peculiar horrors to offer. Severian/Severian?

If there were Lupine slash, I'd lay odds that the most popular relationship would be Horn/Krait.

What makes the concept ludicrous is this: Who is the fan writing the fanfic? Not Wolfe, certainly; he's the creator of all this. Not the editorial kids; what comes from them isn't fiction -- it's either reconstruction or outright lies.

Are those novels dealing with historical figures, which don't contradict the historical record but which invent situations and conversations not appearing in the record, outright lies? True, the editors did not present their third-person sections as fiction, and to that extent they are lying, at

least by implication. But functionally, I would argue that the sections are fiction, and should be read as fiction, with a protagonist who is distinct from Narr, but based on the editors' view of Narr.

--Adam

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

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes — 20 Jun 2001, 08:40 · follows Adam Stephanides

Adam writes:

And I agree the sections aren't literally fanfic. But mantis used the term, iirc, to indicate

1) That the third-person sections are fictional, at least in part; and

2) That the motive of the fictionizers is to fill in emotionally satisfying bits absent from the original narrative.

The former of these is true, I would argue

Stipulated: within the completely fictional universe of discourse, the third-person narrative sections of RttW are fictional(ized) accounts of the activities of the Narrator Formerly Known as Horn.

(see below) and the latter seems likely to be at least partially true for the conversation with Remora, and may well be true of the Whorl material.

Also stipulated: the claimed motives of fictional editors is to round out the incompleated narrative of the Narrator Latterly Known as Silk. Further stipulated: this is at least a part of their actual motivation.

As a matter of fact, on the website I cited earlier for Pullman fanfic, there is quite a lot of fanfic dealing with real people, namely music groups (the vast majority of it on boy bands: there are over five thousand Nsync fanfics).

I'm not sure what the correct term for this stuff is, but it's different from fanfic as known in the world of SF fandom. I suspect it might be actionable in a larger sense than copyright or trademark violation -- not clear if it would actually be considered libellous, but certainly it doesn't qualify as protected, either as reportage, as "satire or parody," or under any other protection I can think of. Okay, I'm not a libel lawyer, but there's a reason for all those "no resemblance to any person living or dead" disclaimers you read in the front of books, and there's no way any of those Nsync fans could claim that their fictional characters bore no resemblance to the real bandmembers. Oy, whatever.

"Slash" isn't necessarily pornographic or erotica.

Maybe now. It was originally. (Sorry; old fart speaking here. I'm remembering the antediluvian 1970s and early stuff like "The Rising.")

If there were Lupine slash, I'd lay odds that the most popular relationship would be Horn/Krait.

Duh. Should of thought of that one myself. Or maybe Silk/Horn, though it would be hard to locate that in the received chronology... Maybe Jolenta/Dorcas...

Are those novels dealing with historical figures, which don't contradict the historical record but which invent situations and conversations not appearing in the record, outright lies?

All fiction is lies ;*P

More seriously: if well-done, such a piece can be true even though not factual. If presented as fact, it's a lie; if presented as a fictional reconstruction, it's not a lie.

And that gives the editors a kind of out: since they did go to the trouble of inserting -- no, not a disclaimer, just an explanation of what they did -- it's a non-lying fictional reconstruction.

Except, perhaps, for that interlude in the conversation with Remora: as others have noted, there is no plausible way for the editors to have done anything but make it up from whole cloth.

But functionally, I would argue that the sections are fiction, and should be read as fiction, with a protagonist who is distinct from Narr, but based on the editors' view of Narr.

Functionally, I would disagree strongly. By interspersing their reconstructions with the Narr's manuscript, I feel that they've implicitly claimed for it a status of equivalent facticity, to which it is not entitled. Which drags me back to the Gospel According to Luke... but I'll let that one swing.

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

Kevin J. Maroney — 20 Jun 2001, 12:14 · follows Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

At 08:40 AM 6/20/01 -0700, Blattid wrote:

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I'm not sure what the correct term for this stuff is, but it's different from fanfic as known in the world of SF fandom.

I don't think so. It's different from the core fanfic of the early Trek fandom, but everything and everyone gets pulled into the broader sweeps of fanfic.

Duh. Should of thought of that one myself. Or maybe Silk/Horn, though it would be hard to locate that in the received chronology... Maybe Jolenta/Dorcas...

Well, Jolenta/Dorcas is just off-stage, so it would seem obvious....

I'm trying to think of the most appalling possible New Sun fanfic. Father Inire and the mandrake? Little Severian and Typhon? Thecla and an avern? The Green Man and Master Ash could actually be pretty cool.

Wombat, a.k.a. Kevin Maroney kmaroney at ungames.com
Kitchen Staff Supervisor, New York Review of Science Fiction
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Adam Stephanides — 20 Jun 2001, 21:47 · follows Kevin J. Maroney

on 6/20/01 11:14 AM, Kevin J. Maroney at kmaroney at ungames.com wrote:
I'm trying to think of the most appalling possible New Sun fanfic. Father
Inire and the mandrake? Little Severian and Typhon? Thecla and an avern?
The Green Man and Master Ash could actually be pretty cool.

A New Sun/Sailor Moon crossover.

--Adam

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