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The Whorl list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 08 Nov 1999

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Bjpp2 — 08 Nov 1999, 15:08

I think that criticisms of John Clute's style ignore the fact that he is (unlike most critics) an original prose stylist. His innovative, if sometimes contorted, writing has vastly enriched SF criticism, not only because of his cogent insights, but because he has unlocked a critical vocabulary equal to the complete expression of those insights. He has his clumsy and inattentive moments, but I'd rather have him review OBW than leave the task to pedestrian hacks like the authors of certain other published reviews cited on amazon.

I read Clute's review and was very surprised at the poor writing. I know, who am I to criticize, but c'mon: "They are, to begin with, each of them, regardless of the number of volumes they were broken into for easy publication, a single novel." Three clauses between "they are" and "a single novel"? Using the adjective "vast" twice in the same sentence (and three times in the review)? Perhaps college freshmen who get a "D" on their English papers can say, "But professor, you don't understand. I am 'an original prose stylist.'"

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