Fantasy, morality and ideology: a comparative study of C.S. Lewis' The Chronicles of Narnia and Philip Pullman's His Dark Materials


Abstract

This thesis begins with an introduction to children's literature, looking at its history in order to contextualise the texts under examination, and the specific arguments surrounding the study of children's books. It then looks closely at the complicated issue of ideology, specifically with regards to children's literature as a concept at the centre of any discussion of books for children. The discussion then investigates the nature of fantasy writing and the ways in which alternative worlds are used in The Chronicles of Narnia and His Dark Materials. C.S. Lewis and Philip Pullman use alternative world to very different ends, one to escape the present world and the other to deal with issues which concern the contemporary world. However regardless of Lewis' attempts to escape the present, his books still reflect his attitudes towards contemporaneity and in this sense are not escapist. It then looks at the morality expressed in each of their works and the various expectations and responsibilities of children's authors. Lastly it looks at four key areas of Lewis' ideology which Pullman addresses and challenges in the His Dark Materials trilogy. Conclusions about the message conveyed in each authors' work follow.

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Pullman's criticism is of CS Lewis for using light and dark metaphors. That's a classic issue for most classic literature. The same criticism would apply to Star Wars for the use of light and dark metaphors. Is it racist? 190 views · View 2 Upvoters. Related Questions. Why do you think C.S. Lewis chose a snowy, icy, cold, winter-wonderland setting for the book/movie? How accurate was the portrayal of CS Lewis in Shadowlands? Since J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis were Christians, why did they write stories that contained elements of witchcraft that are condemned in the Bible? What should other fa... Pullman's vehement rejection of links between His Dark Materials and C.S. Lewis's Narnia books. Both series are influenced by Paradise Lost but read from their own religious position: Lewis is the conservative traditionalist and Pullman the liberal reformer. In both, Christian allegory is used to encourage deeper readings of the works. Ultimately, Pullman's criticism of Narnia draws attention to similarities between the two series and the power of both to provoke challenging questions rather than straightforward answers. Alternative Worlds in Fantasy Fiction Terry Pratchett, and Philip Pullman and others Including 'The Amber Spyglass'. London: Continuum Huttar, Charles A. (1977) 'C.S. Lewis's Narnia and the "Grand Design" The Longing for a Form: Essays on the Fiction of. Jan 2001. 119-33. C. S. Lewis, a well-known author and apologist, is best known by people of all ages for his seven volume series entitled The Chronicles of Narnia. As Lewis wrote about the land of Narnia, an imaginary world visited by children of this world, he had two obvious purposes: to entertain the readers and to suggest analogies of the Christian faith. Although some feel that his stories are violent, Lewis is successful at using fiction to open peoples' hearts to accepting Christ as their Savior because he first entertains the audience with a wonderful story. Lewis talked about how he came to write