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## Online Midwinter Seminar (OMS) #1 Report

Victoria Gaydosik

SWOSU retiree, victoria\_gaydosik@mac.com

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## ONLINE MIDWINTER SEMINAR REPORTS

By Victoria Gaydosik, co-sponsor

At the risk of tooting my own horn, I'd like to report that the first-ever Online Midwinter Seminar on the topic "The Inklings and Horror: Fantasy's Dark Corners," occurred as planned on February 4-5, 2022, and we think it was a success! We would have been happy to find 40 attendees, but in the end over 80 people registered for OMS #1, boding well for the annual continuance of this new MythSoc venture. We built on the excellent work of the sponsors of MythCon 51 (the "Halfling" con, and our first online effort), Megan Abrahamson and Leslie Donovan. With my co-sponsor, Phillip Fitzsimmons, we shepherded our presenters, session hosts, tech mods, and other volunteers through an evening and a day of scholarship and fannish events intended to give us all a little dose of fantasy midway between annual conventions. Many thanks are due to the people who showed up and made it all happen!

We hosted welcoming activities on the evening of February 4, including recorded welcome messages (available now at <https://dc.swosu.edu/oms/oms1/schedule/2/>) and announcements of forthcoming MythSoc events such as MythCon #52 and OMS #2. Escorted tours of two online games followed: one of the Witcher games, in honor of a panel by Sarah Brown and Kristine Larson that used examples and themes found in the Tolkien and the Witcher books/games/TV phenomenon. And for those less interested in gaming, a Bardic Circle with Optional Threadcraft Share was available at the same time, hosted by people who had never attended a Bardic Circle, but who managed to keep things going. We learned that Zoom really doesn't work for group singing!

On Saturday, February 5, fourteen Zoom presentations were available in two strands, with corresponding discussion options on Discord. Presenters came to us from Spain, Hawai'i, Germany, Canada, England, and all over the remainder of the US. All of the selected panelists were able to Zoom in, and all panels but one were recorded. (Oversight deprived us of Sara Brown and Kristine Larson's excellent observations.) Anyone who was unable to attend, or who had to choose between two equally tempting options on the day of the event, can now view the recordings by going to <https://dc.swosu.edu/oms/oms1/>, scrolling down to find the desired panel (except as noted above), and clicking on the panel name. In the new window, click PLAY.

As an extra benefit of the success of OMS #1, MythSoc now has a designated volunteer staff person to serve as Online Events Manager, Tim Lenz. Online components are likely to become regular features of MythSoc events as the pandemic drags its slow length along, and Tim will provide continuity and expertise to keep things running smoothly.

Next year, OMS #2 will feature the topic "Fantasy Goes to Hell," sponsored by Janet Brennan Croft. Look for the CFP later this year!