

MYTHPRINT

The Monthly Bulletin of the Mythopoeic Society

Vol. 41 No. 6

June 2004

Whole No. 267



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Illustrations

Cover: "Éowyn & Faramir" by Sylvia Hunnewell © 1985
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(Send materials for publication, letters, comments, etc.)

Eleanor M. Farrell, Editor



Subscriptions & Back Order Information:

See inside back cover

Mythopoeic Society Information:

Edith Crowe, Corresponding Secretary



DEADLINES for receiving material for each issue of *Mythprint* are the 1st of the preceding month (eg, July 1st for the August issue).

2004 Mythopoeic Awards Finalists

Mythopoeic Fantasy Award, Adult Literature

Lois McMaster Bujold, *Paladin of Souls* (Eos)

Kij Johnson, *Fudoki* (Tor)

Ursula K. Le Guin, *Changing Planes* (Harcourt)

Patricia A. McKillip, *In the Forests of Serre* (Ace)

Robin McKinley, *Sunshine* (Berkley)

Mythopoeic Fantasy Award, Children's Literature

Kate DiCamillo, *The Tale of Despereaux* (Candlewick Press)

Clare B. Dunkle, *The Hollow Kingdom* (Holt)

Cornelia Funke, *Inkheart*, translated from German by Anthea Bell (The Chicken House)

Shannon Hale, *The Goose Girl* (Bloomsbury USA)

Terry Pratchett, *The Wee Free Men* (HarperCollins)

Mythopoeic Scholarship Award for Inklings Studies

Jane Chance, ed., *Tolkien the Medievalist* (Routledge, 2003)

Matthew Dickerson, *Following Gandalf: Epic Battles and Moral Victory in The Lord of the Rings* (Brazos Press, 2003)

John Garth, *Tolkien and the Great War: The Threshold of Middle-earth* (Houghton Mifflin, 2003)

Don W. King, *C.S. Lewis, Poet: The Legacy of His Poetic Impulse* (Kent State University Press, 2001)

Mythopoeic Scholarship Award for Myth and Fantasy Studies

Mike Ashley, *Algernon Blackwood: An Extraordinary Life* (Carroll and Graf, 2001)

Francis Bridger, *A Charmed Life: The Spirituality of Potterworld* (Darton Longman & Todd, 2001)

William Patrick Day, *Vampire Legends in Contemporary American Culture: What Becomes a Legend Most* (University Press of Kentucky, 2002)

John Lawrence & Robert Jewett, *The Myth of the American Superhero* (Eerdmans, 2002)

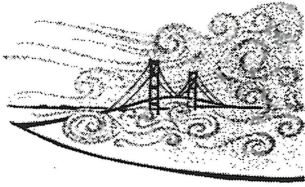
Margaret Mackey, ed., *Beatrix Potter's Peter Rabbit: A Children's Classic at 100* (Scarecrow, 2002)

Jennifer Schacker, *National Dreams: The Remaking of Fairy Tales in Nineteenth-Century England* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003)

The winners of this year's awards will be announced at the banquet during Mythcon XXXV, to be held in Ann Arbor, Michigan, from July 30th-August 2nd, 2004. A complete list of Mythopoeic Award winners is available on the Society web site:

<http://www.mythsoc.org/awards.html>

The finalists for past awards, text of recent acceptance speeches, and selected book reviews are also listed in this on-line section. For more information about the Mythopoeic Awards, please contact the Awards Administrator: Eleanor M. Farrell, [REDACTED]



Mythcon 35: Bridges to Other Worlds: Thirty-Five Years of Mythopoeic Scholarship

July 30- August 2,

2004

The Michigan
League at the
University of
Michigan,
Ann Arbor

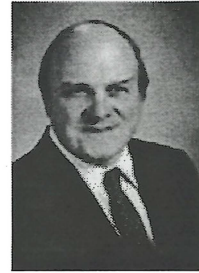
Author Guest:

Neil Gaiman



Scholar Guest:

Charles A. Huttar



Name/s _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Postcode _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

Registration:

\$55 Mythopoeic Society members

\$65 non-members

\$40 students (age 12-16 with guardian, or over 16 with valid student ID)

Children under 12: free, but must be accompanied by guardian

One-day memberships \$40 at the door

If you are uncertain of your Society membership status, please contact our Membership Secretary, Marion VanLoo, at [REDACTED]

If you are an Ann Arbor area resident and plan to drive to the conference each day, consider carefully the option of having breakfasts with the conferees at the hotel, leaving your car in the hotel parking lot, and riding the conference shuttle buses. Parking on Central Campus is hard to find and expensive.

Room and Meals for Conference members:

*** You may pay in installments, with the full amount due by July 10. ***

Lodging: Friday night through Sunday night

- \$240/room (total payment) *Price is per room, which can accommodate up to 4 people.*
- \$80/ room payment #1 of 3
- \$80/ room payment #2 of 3
- \$80/ room payment #3 of 3

You may choose to room alone, or with up to 3 roommates. Rooms come equipped with either

- one king bed or
- two double beds.
- NO SMOKING room
- Quiet floor
- ADA accessible room

Roommate/s' name/s _____

Meals: Two meal packages are available.

- \$132.50: this includes Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast, lunch & dinner, Sunday breakfast, lunch & Banquet, and Monday breakfast
- \$47.50 meals payment #1 of 3
- \$47.50 meals payment #2 of 3
- \$47.50 meals payment #3 of 3

I prefer vegetarian meals

Make checks payable to Mythcon 35.
Full payments due by July 10, 2004

- \$95.00: same meals without breakfasts
- \$35 meals payment #1 of 3
- \$35 meals payment #2 of 3
- \$35 meals payment #3 of 3

- \$42 breakfast buffets only (3)
- \$18 lunch buffets only (2)
- \$50 dinner buffets only (2)
- \$35 Banquet ticket only

Register online at _____ print and mail the registration form found at _____ or Mail to: Mythcon 35, _____

Questions? _____

Activity Calendar

Matthew Winslow, Discussion Group Secretary
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Prospective Groups

CALIFORNIA

San Diego: LOTHLORIEN

Linda Sundstrom, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

CONNECTICUT

Southington: FANTASTIC WORLDS

Bill Pierce, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

FLORIDA

Tampa Bay: HOBBITON

Paul S. Ritz, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

North Central Florida: ERYN GALEN

B.L. McCauley, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

ILLINOIS

Peoria: THE FAR WESTFARTHING SMIAL

Mike Foster, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

June: J.R.R. Tolkien &/vs. Peter Jackson

July: *The Da Vinci Code* by Dan Brown

August: *The Hobbit*, Ch. I-VIII

September: *The Hobbit*, Ch. IX-XIX

INDIANA

Central Indiana: CERIN AMROTH

Ellen Denham, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

MICHIGAN

Julie Bailey, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

OHIO

Akron

David Staley, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Chartered Groups

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles/Pasadena: MYDGARD

Lee Speth, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

June: *The Fellowship of the Ring* by J.R.R. Tolkien

San Francisco Bay Area: KHAZAD-DÛM

Amy Wisniewski & Edith Crowe, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

June: *Neverwhere* by Neil Gaiman

Summer: Khazad-dûm Book Toss (at Mythcon 35)

COLORADO

Denver area: FANUIDHOL ("CLOUDY HEAD")

Patricia Yarrow, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Washington & Suburbs: KNOSSOS

Mimi Stevens, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

HAWAII

Oahu: SAMMATH NAUR

Steve Brown, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

June: *King's Dragon* by Kate Elliot

July: *The Telling* by Ursula K. Le Guin

IOWA

Decorah: ALFHEIM

Doug Rossman, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

LOUISIANA

Baton Rouge: ROKE

Sally Budd, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

MICHIGAN

Ann Arbor area: GALADHREMMIN-ENNORATH

Dave & Grace Lovelace, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis-St. Paul: RIVENDELL

David Lenander, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

NEVADA

Reno: CRICKHOLLOW

Joanne Burnett, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

NEW YORK

New York: HEREN ISTARION

(*THE NEW YORK TOLKIEN SOCIETY*)

Anthony Burdge & Jessica Burke, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

OREGON

Mid-Willamette Valley Area

Donovan Mattole, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

June: *Walking on Water* by Madeline L'Engle

July: *The Inklings* by Humphrey Carpenter

Portland: BYWATER INKLINGS

For more information, contact DG Secretary

PENNSYLVANIA

Lancaster Area: C.S. LEWIS AND FRIENDS

Neil Gussman, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

SOUTH CAROLINA

Columbia: THE COLUMBIA C.S. LEWIS SOCIETY

Nina Fowler, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

WASHINGTON

Seattle: MITHLOND

Matthew Winslow, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

June: *The Golden Compass* by Philip Pullman

WISCONSIN

Milwaukee: THE BURRAHOBBITS

Jeffrey & Jan Long, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

June: *Merlin of the Oak Wood* by Ann Chamberlin

July: *The Acts of King Arthur & His Noble Knights* by

John Steinbeck

Special Interest Group

THE ELVISH LINGUISTIC FELLOWSHIP

Carl Hostetter, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Newsletter, *Vinyar Tengwar*. Journal, *Parma*

Eldalamberon: Christopher Gilson, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Correspondence Groups

BUTTERBUR'S WOODSHED (general fantasy)

Diane Joy Baker, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

July: *Visions of Faerie*

ONCE UPON A TIME (children's fantasy)

Laura Krentz, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Online Discussion Groups

MYTHSOC E-LIST

Society activities and general book-related discussion.

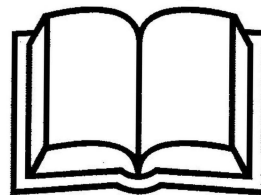
Sign up: [REDACTED] or contact

Joan Marie Verba: [REDACTED]

COINHERENCE

Online discussion of Charles Williams

David Davis: E-mail: [REDACTED]



Book Reviews

JOHN M. FORD, *Heat of Fusion and Other Stories*. New York: Tor, 2004. ISBN 0-312-85546-X, hc, 366 pp., \$24.95.

John M. Ford is a highly distinctive and imaginative writer floating around the borders between mythic science-fiction and technophile fantasy. He's a little bit like Howard Waldrop, but at the same time not at all like him, and more elusive. What he likes to do that's like Waldrop is to mix things up, but he mixes them differently. Werewolves and space wars. Precognition and film-making. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and concentration camps. Gothic novels and psychic researchers. And, more whimsically, Ernest Hemingway and shopping malls.

"It was nearly sunset before I found my car in the big lot. It was not always so, when a man would drive all day in a car with the big fins and the name of a jungle animal. Now the cars have no fins and names like the old ones give to poodles."

All these are in stories here; so is his most famous mixture, Camelot and railroads, in the World Fantasy Award-winning poem, "Winter Solstice, Camelot Station." Yes, poem. Half the items in the book are verse, mostly narrative, at which Ford excels. I particularly enjoyed reading the Three Musketeers meet ... wait, I think it's supposed to be a surprise; the sonnet cycle on science-fiction cliches; and "110 Stories," Ford's response to September 11th. "I hugged the stranger sitting next to me. / So this is what you call a second chance. / One turn aside, into eternity. / This is New York. We'll find a place to dance."

This is a thinking reader's collection of the unusual and thoughtful.

Reviewed by David Bratman

CORNELIA FUNKE, *Inkheart*. Translated from German by Anthea Bell. Frome, Somerset: The Chicken House, 2003. ISBN 0439531640, hc, 544 pp., \$19.95.

Inkheart is the latest book by the German author of the highly praised *The Thief Lord*. A delightful book for book lovers, every chapter starts out with a quote from a book—some quite familiar, others more obscure. Twelve-year-old Meggie loves books. Her father Mo is a bookbinder, and their house is full of books. One night a strange man named Dustfinger comes to their home with a warning for Mo, and the next day Mo whisks Meggie off to bibliophile Great-aunt Elinor's home in Italy.

Before long, the villainous Capricorn has captured all three of them and has burned Elinor's rarest books. It turns out that Mo has a special talent—when he reads aloud, people and objects from books can appear in our world. That is how Capricorn and his minions accidentally arrived, and if he destroys all the copies of the book *Inkheart*, he can never be sent back. Capricorn can also use Mo's talent to read gold out of books such as *Treasure Island*. The villains are sometimes frighteningly evil, though the conflicted Dustfinger can be both friend and foe. And though she plots with Fenoglio, the author of *Inkheart*, who is now also a captive, ultimately it is up to Meggie to find a way to put things right.

Reviewed by Laura Krentz

JAMES A. HETLEY, *The Summer Country*. New York: Ace Books, 2002. ISBN 0441009727, hc, 368 pp., \$14.00.

There are some books that look promising at the outset, but in the end fail to live up to that promise. James A. Hetley's *The Summer Country* is such a book.

Based on Celtic mythology, Hetley's first novel is about the awakening of Maureen Pierce to her heritage as one of the Old Ones—the fairy people of Celtic legend. We first meet Maureen as she is walking home from her job as swing-shift clerk at a convenience store. She soon discovers that she is being followed by someone. She tries to shake him loose, but to no avail. Just as she confronts him, pulling out her gun, weirdness happens with time standing still and a knight in shining armor (almost literally) appearing to save her.

The “knight” turns out to be Brian Arthur Pendragon Albion, an Old One who is trying to stop his diabolical siblings from kidnapping Maureen to use her for a breeding program to reinvigorate the Old Ones' failing genetic pool.

Like I said, the book starts out well, but quickly falters. If the premise of a genetic breeding program of the Tuatha de Danann weren't silly enough, Hetley brings into the mix the fact that Maureen is borderline psychotic because of having been raped by her sister's boyfriend when she was a pre-teen. What could have been a fun, Celtic-flavored adventure, descends quickly into a politically correct story of sexual politics. Reading the novel is quite torturous, since it reduces all of life to mere sexual relations. In the end, Brian redeems himself (and by proxy, all men) by being gentlemanly to Maureen, but even such an end doesn't justify the 300-plus pages of silliness it took to get there.

Hetley's writing is promising—the characters are believable, and the pacing is well executed—but he needs to polish his thematic explorations, become more multi-dimensional, examining the many sides of an issue, before I would give him a “thumbs up.”

Reviewed by Matthew Scott Winslow



ROBIN MCKINLEY, *Sunshine*. New York: Berkley Books, 2003. ISBN 0425191788, hc, 400 pp., \$23.95.

I've seen Robin McKinley accused of having only one plot: outcast girl gets powers, kicks butt. This kind of reductionism, of course, can be extended to just about any story. Some of us over a certain age even used to have test questions on this in Tenth Grade Literature: What is the plot of this book? A) Man *vs.* Man, B) Man *vs.* Nature, C) Man *vs.* Universe. Perhaps this one can be further reduced to Woman Gains Choice, and we first encounter it in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, written in the early 1800s, wherein a female makes the choice concerning her future life and doesn't have to pay the price for such temerity by promptly dying of consumption. It's a trope women (and men) have been exploring in various story forms such as “Beauty and the Beast” for much longer: “Beauty and the Beast” being older, darker, representing women whose physical strength is less than man or beast (much less a combo), gaining equality through strength of will.

McKinley looks at this story form from several angles. Anyone who thinks her stories cookie cutter have not paid attention: *The Blue Sword* is probably the most conventional; *Deerskin* is not at all conventional. Now she's written a third take on this form with *Sunshine*.

This story has to do with vampires. Now here a well-known story form intersects with a very popular trope. I've heard people talking about how sick they are of vampire stories, that they are stale, nothing new to be said, and of course vampires (like elves or dragons or horses) have been tamed down by many writers into being very pretty forms of humans, powerful, but with very human (usually mapping heavily onto middle-teen adolescence) emotions. Well, McKinley teases apart the threads of this familiar tapestry and reweaves them into a very strange form.

The story begins with our first person protagonist describing her pleasant but claustrophobic life as the baker for a roadside diner that is very popular in her small town. We gain the impression of ordinary folk of the type we recognize in our own lives, an ordinary diner, an ordinary small town. Exactly when the reader feels as closed in by all this cheery, well-intentioned ordinariness as does the protagonist, she takes off to be by herself to the lakeside, which, we are told, is not popular any more since the Voodoo Wars.

The Voodoo Wars? We've had, so far, exactly one other hint that things are not quite as ordinary as they appear when the protagonist mentions that one of her very normal brothers wants to go into Other law. Well, "other" is easily assumed to be on the side of the downtrodden; Voodoo Wars catches the eye but the story still marches on a few paragraphs, and then, abruptly, while she's at the lakeside, the vampires come. This is page 12.

I had to look back at that beginning to really appreciate the mastery of McKinley's storytelling skills. Twelve pages of ordinariness, and a cliff-hanger, after which she pauses to tell us that the worst of the Others are vampires. Okay, then this is our world, but with vampires. No, wait, there's just this tiny mention of demons. But the story flashes on, and the protagonist is taken by vampires to a disintegrating ballroom, forced to dress in an extravagant crimson gown, and shackled to the wall within reach of another vampire. Who is also shackled to the wall. Then they leave, giggling.

The story takes off like a rocket from there: we find out the protagonist's name after we find out about the power of names, we find out more about vampires, and the Voodoo Wars, and the protagonist's background. Boundaries are broken over and over, and the reader, along with the characters, has to struggle to redefine them. The ordinary roadside inn with its ordinary charac-

ters turns out to be an anchor of relative safety in an increasingly strange and dangerous world. This is **not** our world. It's even more threatening, more perilous, but there are ways to fight it. There are no wish-fulfillment mega-powers gained just by suffering winsomely enough. Power has to be fought for, inwardly and outwardly, it rips apart lives and requires dispassionate remapping of one's universal landscape. And using power is painful, just as a real punch bruises the attacker as well as the victim.

Along the way McKinley examines families, love, romance, sexual attraction, morality, ethics, deception, the social contract, eschatology, the perils of responsibility. Absolutely nothing is easy—except, perhaps, the sharing of food.

McKinley's vampire is not pretty, does not react with adolescent emotion; he is compelling, and a fascinating study in how human can become alien, yet retain a conflicted nexus of human traits. The ending is not neatly tied off, but is breathtaking with possibility. I sure hope she returns to this world. There is so much more to explore and to say—and I really want to know more about the spinster landlady, who was my favorite character of all.

Reviewed by Sherwood Smith



Mythprint is the monthly bulletin of the Mythopoeic Society, a nonprofit educational organization devoted to the study, discussion and enjoyment of myth and fantasy literature, especially the works of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, and Charles Williams. To promote these interests, the Society publishes three magazines, maintains a World Wide Web site, and sponsors the annual Mythopoeic Conference and awards for fiction and scholarship, as well as local and written discussion groups.

Mythopoeic Society Web Site:

www.mythsoc.org

Membership and Subscriptions

Mythopoeic Society membership: \$20/year includes a subscription (postage extra for non-U.S. addresses) to *Mythprint*; basic membership \$10/year without newsletter; either entitles you to members' rates on publications and other benefits.

Postage and Non-member Subscription Rates

	Members	Institutions and non-members
First class U.S.	included	\$20/year
Canada (air)	\$5/year additional for postage	\$25/year
Overseas (air)	\$14/year additional for postage	\$34/year

The number in the upper right corner of your mailing label is the "Whole Number" of the last issue of your subscription. Checks should be made out to the Mythopoeic Society. Foreign orderers should use U.S. funds if possible; otherwise add 15% to the current exchange rate. Back issues of *Mythprint* are available for \$1 each (U.S. postage included)

The Mythopoeic Society also publishes two other magazines: *Mythlore: A Journal of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams, and Mythopoeic Literature* (subscription \$18/year for Society members, \$4 for a sample issue) and *The Mythic Circle*, an annual magazine publishing fiction, poems, etc. (\$8/issue).

Subscriptions and back issues of Society publications may be purchased directly through our web site (using PayPal or Discover card), or you may contact:

Mythopoeic Society Orders Department

Submissions for *Mythprint*

Reviews, discussion group reports, news items, letters, art work, and other submissions for *Mythprint* are always welcome. Please contact the editor for details on format, or send materials to:

Mythprint

Eleanor M. Farrell, Editor



The Mythopoeic Society



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