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Reviews

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REVIEWS

A SWORD BETWEEN THE SEXES?: C.S. LEWIS AND THE GENDER DEBATES.

Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen. Grand Rapids, Michigan: BrazosPress (a division of Baker Publishing Group), 2010. 264 pp. \$22.00. ISBN 978-1-58743-208-8.

THIS REVIEWER FIRST MET SOME OF MARY STEWART VAN LEEUWEN'S arguments on C. S. Lewis and gender in a colloquium issue of *Christian Scholar's Review* (36:4 [Summer 2007]), where she was one of the two main essayists. She cites her essay in a footnote (14 n1), but the other main essayist—in favor of gender hierarchy—and the four respondents are forgotten. Instead of re-fighting that battle, she has developed her arguments far more fully, particularly on the subject of Lewis and the social sciences, which was much more briefly touched on in the seventeen-page essay. Indeed, she is really arguing three main topics in this book: Lewis's attitudes on gender, Lewis and the social sciences, and Lewis's theological distortions. The last one is the surprise. This review will become pretty much a step-by-step survey of the book, because it is a solidly argued work.

The book has ten chapters. The first begins with some parallels between Van Leeuwen's Scots-Canadian upbringing and Lewis's Protestant Ulster one, but she turns to a personal account of her responses to Lewis's writings as an undergraduate: appreciation of his clear discussions of Eros (both homosexual and heterosexual) in *Surprised by Joy* and *The Four Loves*, respectively; appreciation for his logical deflation of logical positivism (which positivism she was being taught as a student); and an extreme non-appreciation of Lewis's "essentialist and hierarchical" view of the two sexes—he "was a major stumbling block to [her] acceptance of Christianity" (28). Essentialist because Lewis sets up the gender roles as built into the universe—with God as the Male at top of the universal hierarchy.

After this personal opening, the next four chapters are differently focused, but they all deal with Lewis and gender. Chapter Two summarizes the Victorian and Edwardian views of women and then turns to a survey of Lewis's views. Van Leeuwen starts with Jane Studdock in *That Hideous Strength* and Tinidril in *Perelandra*; she considers "Priestesses in the Church?" and "Membership." Such matters are as basic as Ransom's discussion with Jane Studdock about gender: even if she avoided the masculine at the earthly level,

she would find a greater Masculinity at a higher level. Van Leeuwen sees the women in *That Hideous Strength*—leaving aside such a figure as Fairy Hardcastle—as either dutiful wives or unmarried professionals; Jane is trying to be both, and she is told to be a dutiful wife. But the author finds a shift in Lewis's attitudes that starts at the time of the *Chronicles of Narnia* and carries into *Till We Have Faces*. She points to a change in the essentialist attitude in *The Four Loves* and the omission of gender hierarchy in *The Discarded Image*. She finds complete reversals of earlier attitudes in *A Grief Observed*. This reviewer wishes she had considered two of Lewis's short stories from his last years, "Ministering Angels" and "The Shoddy Lands," before she reached her conclusion about Lewis's change—no doubt the change was true, but it does not seem to be complete.

One digression in this second chapter is on Mark Studdock. It is not on gender, but rather it prepares for the latter part of the book about Lewis and the social sciences. Studdock is a sociologist: "He was [...] a glib examinee in subjects that require no exact knowledge" (qtd. 44). Since Van Leeuwen is an academic psychologist, Lewis's attitudes about the social sciences (and about Freud and Jung) are involving for her—and produce a valuable discussion.

Chapter Three is concerned with Lewis's sources for his beliefs about gender, both Biblical and (for hierarchy) Aristotelian, and their results. One section is on Lewis's view of revelation—progressive through a primitive feeling of the numinous, a finding of the Tao, a combination of the two in Judaism, the appearance of Christ, the spread of the faith. Her main point is that Lewis accepted a partial inspiration of pagan writers; she writes of her

adherence to a theological tradition that takes issue with Lewis's view, more Platonic than biblical, that the activities and things of this life are at most shadows or siren calls meant to beckon us toward the more "solid" and eternal realities of heaven. (69)

Van Leeuwen is a Calvinist in its Reformational tradition. According to the book's index, Plato is mentioned (mainly in this way, as a bad influence) eleven times. Van Leeuwen catches Lewis in one flat Biblical error in "Priestesses in the Church?" when he says that Mary the mother of Jesus was not at Pentecost. She also traces the (heretical) subordinationism that Lewis as a young Christian found in the Trinity—*heretical* because it is clearly denied by two of the Creeds that Lewis accepted. However—she points out—near the end of his life, in *The Discarded Image*, he denied that God the Son was subordinate to God the Father. Even in his early Christian life, in at least some of his letters, Lewis argued more for a hierarchy of gender within the church and the marriage than within other spheres (the passage about the husband dealing with conflicts with neighbors in *Mere Christianity* is an example in marriage). (This third chapter is also interested

in some later writers arguing both essentialism and hierarchy as gender differences, with their citations of Lewis.)

The fourth chapter continues this concern with sources—in the general influence of the Edwardian Age. But the main topic of the chapter is a contrast of Dorothy L. Sayers and Lewis—some parallels in their Edwardian backgrounds, but differences in their attitudes toward gender, Sayers insisting that women are simply human beings, neither better nor worse than men.

If Van Leeuwen had accepted George Sayer's three statements of the affair between Lewis and Janie Moore, she would have had another balance between Sayers and Lewis, since she discusses Sayers's out-of-wedlock son. Some details in the chapter contain errors: Arthur Greeves did not destroy all of Lewis's letters that refer to sexual matters (100)—he blacked out the passages (perhaps two months of Lewis's letters seem to be actually missing). Lewis did not—if this reviewer remembers correctly—ever take part in amateur theatricals (91). Sayers did not direct the productions of her two plays at Canterbury Cathedral (89). But these are trivialities and do not affect the overall value of the chapter.

This comparison of Lewis and a woman is fine as far as it goes (Sayers says some delightful things), but a comparison of Lewis and one of his male friends on gender might have been valuable also. Dom Bede Griffiths appears three times in the index—he was the Roman Catholic whom Lewis had vet some of the theological statements in *Mere Christianity*—but one would not know from Van Leeuwen's comments that he was not a extremely conservative Catholic. Bede Griffiths writes in his *Return to the Centre* (1976), "The whole creation comes forth eternally in the Word from the abyss of Being which is both Father and Mother" (Ch. 3). It does not sound like something Lewis would have written. Griffiths' description of the Trinity is no doubt orthodox, but it is hardly traditional: "All is one Infinite Being, Knowledge and Bliss, being in pure consciousness of unending bliss" (Ch. 5). Less orthodox is another passage, "May we not say that the Holy Spirit is feminine? It is the eternal Wisdom, which in Hebrew, Greek and Latin is always feminine, the divine Sophia" (Ch. 8). Of course, he states it as a question, not a doctrine. Still, one does not hear Lewis here. (His whole book is an attempt to reach the basic center of Christianity, Buddhism, and Hinduism.)

Van Leeuwen's fifth chapter discusses Lewis's dealings with specific women (in addition to Sayers), finding him better than his early theories. The main women discussed are Mary Shelley Nylan, Stella Adwinckle, Sister Penelope Lawson, Ruth Pitter, and Elizabeth Anscombe. The first, third, and fourth discussions are basically based on Lewis's letters. Van Leeuwen has an excellent discussion of the debate between Lewis and Anscombe over three aspects of one of his chapters in *Miracles*. The author has the clearest summary,

that this reviewer remembers, of the points of disagreement and Lewis's revision correcting them (in so far as Lewis agreed with Anscombe's critiques). Further, at one point Van Leeuwen disagrees with one of Lewis's remaining either/or arguments (136). Lewis's dualistic views here are called by Van Leeuwen "Cartesian," being characterized by Descartes' mind-body dualism.

This discussion of Anscombe provides the transition to the following chapters, which deal with Lewis and the social sciences. Van Leeuwen sums up an aspect of Lewis's thought still found in the revised version of his chapter of *Miracles*: "The physical aspects of human beings are amenable to cause-effect exploration, but their mental life can only be studied in terms of meaningful ideas" (136)—that is, by ground-consequent exploration. Lewis's ruling out of scientific, or cause-effect, exploration leaves sociology and academic psychology as invalid—as well as cultural anthropology, economics, and political science. Obviously Van Leeuwen, as an academic psychologist, is going to dispute this.

The next four chapters take up this topic. Some of this material, while valuable for understanding Lewis's ideas, is not directly about gender; some is. Van Leeuwen has an interesting discussion of Lewis's "Psycho-Analysis and Literary Criticism" in the sixth chapter, arguing against Lewis's position on Freud on Van Leeuwen's own Christian grounds. She says too often Lewis believes that the things of this world are completely, or nearly completely, corrupted— "fallen" in Christian terms. Lewis's Platonic tendencies lead him toward dualism (the things of this world are just images of greater things in Heaven, although Plato would not use "Heaven"). She also treats Lewis's praise of Jung, finding the Animus and Anima another form of duality.

An incidental but interesting comment in this sixth chapter is that the "oral tradition in psychology" says that the philosopher Augustine Castle in B.F. Skinner's novel *Walden Two* is based on Lewis (144 n17). That is one that David Bratman's "The Inklings in Fiction: An Annotated Bibliography," in *Mythprint* January 2010, missed.

The seventh chapter is subtitled "The Psychology of Gender since C.S. Lewis." Van Leeuwen surveys the meta-analyses of the literature on gender (with a chart, 181), finding negligible or small differences between the sexes in most areas (math problem solving, reading skills, aggression in adults, moral reasoning orientations, *etc.*). On bell curves, the sexes may peak at slightly different points, but male and female average differences are much smaller than the variability within each sex. One of the specific studies Van Leeuwen emphasizes is in moral reasoning: the "care" orientation is by .28 "effect size" female (within the small range) and the "justice" orientation is by .129 male (within the negligible range). So Lewis's argument in *Mere Christianity* that the husband should deal with neighbors and the wife with their own household has

a *very* slight support, but not enough to justify Lewis's fiat—it depends on the individual husband and wife.

The eighth and ninth chapters discuss Lewis on divorce and parenting—two topics on which he was right, despite the secular academy of his day. In the eighth, Van Leeuwen discusses the Lewis—(divorced) Joy Davidman marriage; but the main development is on studies of the effects of marriages and divorces. The ninth chapter is largely biographical—Lewis's responses to children (godchildren, evacuees from London during World War II, stepsons). Van Leeuwen finds Lewis to have treated them well as individuals, without gender bias. (It seems odd that Maureen Moore does not come into the discussion; surely Lewis learned something about women from watching her grow up.)

The tenth chapter is essentially a summary of the previous arguments that Lewis changed his attitudes toward gender through his life; the chapter is nicely done with some fresh details. (The author does misidentify Roger Lancelyn Green—not by name—as an Inkling, though [250].)

The number of slight factual errors in this book—such as that about Green—is not of great importance. Van Leeuwen is a psychologist, not a Lewisian scholar, who has been pulled into writing this book by her undergraduate attitudes toward Lewis and the invitation to give “the annual C.S. Lewis lecture at the University of Tennessee in March of 2004” (13). Presumably the reason for the invitation, although she does not say so, is because she had occasionally “crossed paths with Lewis via his pronouncements about science, social science, and relations between the sexes” (14)—one assumes that means she had incidentally, in publications, disagreed with his comments. (Her essay in *Christian Scholar's Review* was based on her lecture.) What matters is that she deals well with Lewis within her framework. She does an excellent job on establishing Lewis's early essentialist and hierarchical view of the sexes; she shows that Lewis grows silent about the gender differences later and, in *A Grief Observed*, says things incompatible with the earlier positions. She also shows that his treatment of women was always better than his theories. Her second major area of concern is a defense of the social sciences against Lewis's distrust of their validity. She certainly trusts the validity of what is called “meta-analyses”—that is, sophisticated combining of earlier studies, with numerical results. Probably most of those who consult her book will agree with her arguments on this point—the results seem common sense among the educated in the modern world. But in this matter one has to trust her generalized explanation of how the meta-analyses are done (either that or consult the introduction mentioned by Van Leeuwen [180 n22]). And, of course, the common sense of one era is not that of another, as Van Leeuwen's discussion of the effects of divorce on children shows. Her third major area, about Lewis's type of Christian belief, is more

problematic. Quite frankly, a large variety of beliefs appear within the general Christian community. The Cambridge Platonists of the seventeenth century can be cited as forerunners, to some degree, of Lewis. Van Leeuwen says that Aristotle, not the Bible, gave Lewis his hierarchical system; that Plato, not the Bible, gave Lewis his distrust of the value of all earthly systems (as part of a dualism). But the Bible may be variously interpreted (the other major essayist in the colloquium in *Christian Scholar's Review* used it to defend gender hierarchy). Van Leeuwen does not try to argue from the Bible for the most part (she mentions once that her husband is an Old Testament scholar); but she does comment that the presence of Mary, the mother of Jesus, and other women on Pentecost is often used as an argument for sexual equality in Christianity—this is when she points out Lewis's mistake on the facts.

Overall, this is an important book. It provides the fullest discussion of Lewis and gender hierarchy that students of Lewis have. It at least answers Lewis on the topic of social sciences as well as (and probably slightly better than) he attacks them. It does not settle matters on Lewis's variety of Christianity, but it certainly contributes to the discussion. It has smaller topics nicely developed, such as the discussion of the Lewis-Anscombe debate. No bibliography but very full notes at the bottom of pages. Satisfactory but not an excellent index (e.g., Griffiths is listed three times, but he is mentioned in the book eight times).

—Joe R. Christopher



THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO C.S. LEWIS. Edited by Robert MacSwain and Michael Ward. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. 326 pp. \$29.99 pbk. \$90.00 hbk. 978-0-5217-1114-2.

THERE ARE MANY SIDES TO C. S. LEWIS, some better known than others. Easily the most familiar Lewis is the Lewis of American evangelical piety. Each year the evangelical presses disgorge a flood of books that celebrate Lewis the Bonny Apologist, the twentieth century's greatest defender of the faith; Lewis the Narnian, masterly writer of children's fantasy; and Lewis the Spiritual Director, author of inspiring devotional works. But there are other aspects of Lewis's many-sided genius that are not so widely known. How does Lewis rank, for instance, as a poet or literary critic? What were his talents and contributions as an intellectual historian, a classicist, a novelist, a literary theorist, a philosopher, and a theologian? In this urbane and highly readable book a distinguished (and mostly non-evangelical) team of scholars examines these and other neglected aspects of Lewis's thought and career.

What emerges is a picture of a mind of remarkable power and versatility. Malcolm Guite makes a persuasive case that Lewis is underrated as a poet and that much of his early poetry is more modernist than is generally assumed. John V. Fleming examines Lewis's achievements as a literary critic, noting that Lewis's first scholarly book, *The Allegory of Love*, was like "a powerful explosion, wholly unanticipated, that staggered literature faculties throughout Britain" (18). Other valuable chapters assess Lewis's achievements as an intellectual historian, a literary theorist, and a classicist.

Though it appears in the Cambridge Companions to Religion series, only a few chapters deal specifically with Lewis's religious views. In contrast to many evangelical treatments, very little is said about his well-known apologetical arguments for Christ's divinity ("Lewis's Trilemma"), the reality of heaven ("the argument from desire"), and God's existence ("the moral argument").

There is a fascinating chapter by Charles Taliaferro on Lewis's attempt to refute naturalism—the so-called "argument from reason." In *Miracles* (1947; 2nd ed. 1960), Lewis argues that naturalism—the view that only nature exists and that all events are naturally determined—cannot explain the existence of reasoning. Naturalism, Lewis says, implies that all mental inferences—all thoughts of the form "A implies B"—are fully explainable in terms of brain chemistry and other non-rational processes. Yet reasoning exists only when the mind moves from A to B solely because it *sees* that A implies B, and for no other reason. Thus naturalism cannot explain the existence of reasoning, and in fact cannot be rationally defended since it implies that there are no good reasons for *any* view, including naturalism itself. Naturalism, in short, is hoist on its petard.

Does this argument prove that something "beyond nature" exists? As Taliaferro notes, it does not. Very few naturalists deny the existence of reasons, inferences, and acts of rational insight. Rather, these are seen as parts of "nature," understood as the totality of physical reality and those events and processes that emerge naturally from that physical system. At best, as Taliaferro points out, the argument has force only against a strict and implausible form of naturalism that claims that everything can ultimately be explained in terms of physics.

While all the book's contributors are clearly admirers of Lewis, several take issue with some of his traditionalist views. Three notable examples include Ann Loades's courteous but incisive critique of Lewis's rejection of women priests, Caroline J. Simon's critical probing of what she sees as Lewis's male-biased view of friendship (only shared interests, please, no intimacy or self-disclosure), and Stanley Hauerwas's game attempt to prove that Lewis should have been a total pacifist.

One of the most interesting discussions in the books is Alan Jacobs's rather tortured attempt to defend Michael Ward's widely-hailed "Narnia code"

reading of the Narniad. In his 2008 book, *Planet Narnia*, Ward claimed to have discovered what he termed “the secret imaginative key” to the 60-year-old children’s series. Each of the seven books, he claimed, is cleverly organized around themes associated with one of the seven pre-Copernican planets: Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, the Sun, and the Moon. The unhappy fate of similar code-readings of works such as the Bible, the *Prophecies* of Nostradamus, and most recently the *Harry Potter* series should caution readers to take a long, hard look before embracing Ward’s thesis. Curiously, Jacobs notes one massive problem with Ward’s reading—a 1957 letter in which Lewis told an American boy that when he wrote *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, he didn’t plan to write any more Narnia stories (269). How, then, could Lewis have had a secret plan to encode esoteric astrological correspondences in each of the seven books? Did he lie to the boy, or forget a few short years later how the books came to be written? Neither explanation is likely.

Though readers naturally will find some chapters more interesting or insightful than others, it is a well-written and well-edited collection. The editors have assembled a constellation of top Lewis scholars and distinguished academics to survey the full range of Lewis’s talents and achievements. It is a welcome and overdue book.

—Gregory Bassham



THE LAW AND HARRY POTTER. Jeffrey E. Thomas and Franklin G. Snyder, eds. Durham, North Carolina: Carolina Academic Press, 2010. Softcover. viii + 414pp. \$35.00. ISBN 1594606455.

When the esteemed editor of this journal contacted me and asked me if I would be willing to review a book called *The Law and Harry Potter*, I had to give it some thought. On the one hand, as she pointed out, it made sense to have the book reviewed by someone with a legal background, and it is true that I am one of the few people in the mythopoeic scholarship community about whom that can be said. On the other hand, there was another factor that argued against my taking the task: I had never actually read any of the *Harry Potter* books. But I did have an interest in doing so, and I thought perhaps this would be motivation that I would need to do so. So I agreed to take on the task.

Having thus committed myself, I proceeded to delve into the books. It was not a difficult task! Despite a busy law practice and many other time commitments, I finished the seven books in less than nine days (the main task that I sacrificed during that time was sleeping). This is obviously not the place to

expound upon the *Potter* books themselves, but suffice it to say that I found them far more compelling than I expected. If nothing else, I have the request to review *The Law and Harry Potter* to thank for my firmly joining the ranks of *Potter* fandom.

I therefore was favorably inclined towards the book when I sat down to read it, though I also a bit puzzled as to what could be about the subject over the course of almost 400 pages of small type, mostly written by law professors from the United States and abroad. I'm pleased to report that for the most part I found the various contributions interesting and worthwhile, though of course like virtually any compilation the quality varies (though some of that no doubt is do as much to differences in taste as to anything else). Moreover, I feel confident in recommending the book to any intelligent *Harry Potter* fan who has some interest in legal matters, not just attorneys or law students. However, the book does presume a fair knowledge about and interest in the *Potter* books, so I would not recommend it to anyone who was not already well-familiar with the full series.

The Law and Harry Potter is a series of papers edited by Jeffrey E. Thomas, Associate Dean and Professor of Law at the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law and Franklin G. Snyder, Professor of Law at Texas Wesleyan University School of Law. It addresses the depiction of law and legal concepts in the *Harry Potter* books, not the legal issues that have arisen over the years over the books themselves (a separate topic about which much could be said). The twenty-two chapters are written by nineteen law professors, two attorneys, one economics professor, one economics Ph.D. candidate, one legal librarian, and one high school student. The book is divided into five parts, each described below. Under the guise of discussing aspects of the narratives in the *Potter* books, the book provides a basic overview of many legal, sociological, and economic concepts. As will be seen, some of the authors also take the opportunity to promote a particular political ideology, or moral message.

Part I: Legal Traditions and Institutions

The first part contains four chapters. Each considers aspects of the role of law and legal institutions generally in the wizarding society. "What Role Need Law Play in a Society with Magic" by John Gava and Jeannie Marie Paterson, provides a clever introduction to basic legal concepts, covering contract law, torts, criminal law and constitutional law, while also contrasting Rowling's fictional magical society with that of the real world. Much of what is covered here is basic stuff for any attorney, but it is well-presented and provides excellent background information for a layperson. My only complaint is that the final subsection entitled "Harry Potter's World as a Heroic Society" is superfluous and unnecessary.

The second chapter is "*Bots and Gemots: Anglo-Saxon Legal References in Harry Potter*" by Susan P. Liemer. Despite the broad sounding title, this chapter is almost entirely a discussion of the provenance of the term *Wizengamot*, the wizard court in the Potterverse, and its history in the books. The discussion of the *witenagemot*, which Liemer describes as "an important legal and political institution of Anglo-Saxon Society" (19) and upon which the *Wizengamot* is based, is interesting, but most of the discussion of the wizard trials in the books simply rehashes what readers already know.

This is followed by the chapter with the best title in the book, and one of the most provocative chapters as well: "Harry Potter and the Half-Crazed Bureaucracy," by Benjamin H. Barton. This chapter, one of a number of chapters adapted from an article that originally appeared in a law review, exuberantly makes the case that Rowling's "scathing portrait of government" (35) "may do more for libertarianism than any [book] since John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty* was released in 1859" (36). This is rollicking good stuff; I found it both effectively argued and enjoyable to read despite not at all being a libertarian.

The final chapter in this part, "Moral Choice, Wizardry, Law and Liberty: A Classical Liberal Reading of the Role of Law in the Harry Potter Series," by Andrew P. Morriss, provides an equally fascinating counterpoint. Instead of focusing, as does Barton, on the foibles of government institutions gone amuck, Morriss focuses on "the moral choices that individuals make," concluding that "the Harry Potter series makes a case for a minimal state as a necessary condition for individuals to exercise their moral faculties" (63). This is an erudite analysis of the *Harry Potter* books as a "calibration model," a telling testament to the depth of these "children's books."

Part II: Crimes and Punishment

The second part also contains four chapters. They each focus on various issues of criminal law. The first chapter, "Harry Potter and the Unforgivable Curses," by Aaron Schwanbach, is another taken from an article published in a law review. It is a rather straightforward analysis of the application of the rule of law in the wizard world focusing on a comparison of the treatment of the unforgivable curses (the *Cruciatus* curse, which causes unbearable pain, the *Imperius* Curse, which causes the cursee to be under the complete control of the curser, and *Avada Kedaavra*, which of course is the killing curse), with the treatment of the Dementor's Kiss, and Memory Charms.

The title of the next chapter, "Sirius Black: A Case Study in Actual Innocence," by Geoffrey Christopher Rapp, speaks for itself. Rapp effectively uses Sirius's story to focus on the real world problem of wrongful convictions.

The third chapter, "The Persecution of Tom Riddle: A Study in Human Rights Law," by Geoffrey R. Watson, takes a different approach. It purports to

analyze the human rights violations committed by such international criminals as Harry Potter and Albus Dumbledore against poor persecuted Tom Riddle (aka Lord Voldemort) and his associates. It is fairly cleverly done, and presents a lot of good information about international human rights law, but I ultimately found the chapter off-putting, though that is probably due as much to my own personal dislike for this type of approach than to its quality. I suspect that others would find it more enjoyable.

The final chapter in this part is "Punishment in the Harry Potter Novels" by Joel Fishman. This is another chapter taken from a law review article, but it is one of the least substantial chapters in the book. It gives a rather pedestrian summary of different punishments in the *Potter* books, but it provides little insight into either the books themselves or what they say about punishments in the real world.

Part III: Harry Potter and Identity

This part has five chapters. They deal with various social issues and "identity politics." "Hogwarts, the Family, and the State: Forging Identity and Virtue in Harry Potter," by Danaya C. Wright, returns to the theme of the limitations of government. However, here we have a much broader approach. Wright notes that

Rowling's vision of the interplay of family, school and state in the formation of young wizards [sic] minds is profoundly troubling. The fortuity of Dumbledore's mentorship may have helped Harry turn out right, but it provides no comfort to those who realize that more Tom Riddles may come along and choose to use their magical powers to benefit themselves rather than others. (147)

Wright does a good job of detailing the moral ambiguity that helps to raise Rowling's work above the simple black and white good against evil tales that they appear to be at first glance.

The second chapter in this part is "Harry Potter and the Development of Moral Judgment in Children," by Wendy N. Law and Anna K. Teller. They open with a discussion of "The Tale of the Three Brothers," the tale from *The Tales of Beedle the Bard* which plays such an important role in *Deathly Hallows*. After briefly discussing the history of moral development in children's literature, they apply those lessons to the *Potter* books, through the prisms of tort and criminal law concepts.

The next chapter is "Harry Potter and the Curse of Difference," by Benjamin Lofredo, currently an undergraduate student at Yale, though the chapter was written while he was still a high school student. One would think that in collection of articles mostly written by law professors, one written by a

high school student would be a weak link, but quite the opposite is true. This is one of the strongest chapters in the book. It is well-written and effectively organized and researched, with a strong message: that "Rowling's story provides a current and provocative look at the role of difference in a society that resembles our own in important ways" (176).

Next is "When Harry Met Martin: Imagination, Imagery and the Color Line," by Benjamin G. Davis. This chapter is based on the first four movies, not on Rowling's books, though Davis's criticisms can be implied to apply to the books as well. In it, Davis decries the lack of diversity in the films, invoking the legacy of Martin Luther King to emphasize his disappointment. As a civil rights attorney who spends a good part of my professional life addressing genuine issues of racial discrimination, I find these criticisms to be trite and disingenuous. Setting aside the fact that there are a number of people of color who play some roles in the books (and films), including Harry's initial love interest, Cho Chang, the Patil twins with whom Harry and Ron attend the Triwizard Tournament dance, Quidditch player Angelina Johnson, and of course Kingsley Shackleforth, who ends the series as the Minister of Magic, the most powerful position in the wizard world, Davis seems intent to seek harm for harm's sake, rather than acknowledging that the *Potter* films (and books) merely reflect that the world that Rowling is describing. Davis lumps together the *Potter* films with the *Narnia* and *Lord of the Rings* films, noting (incorrectly, in the case of the latter) that they are "a form of childhood fantasy," decrying the fact that "the imagery used in each seems to draw a short line on the basis of color. In these areas of fantasy, persons of color cannot either play key roles (as in Harry Potter or a little bit in Narnia) or even exist on the side of good (Lord of the Rings)" (181-182). Davis's invocation of King's dream of a world in which "the color line will finally disappear" (188) is a worthy one, but I think in this case his target is misplaced.

The final chapter in this part is "Harry Potter and the Image of God: How House-Elves Can Help Us to Understand the Dignity of the Person," by Alison McMorran Sulentic. This is fascinating and quite thought-provoking examination of what it means to be a person through the prism of Catholic social thought. This is accomplished primarily by looking at the role of the "patently non-human" (199) house-elves Dobby, Winky, Kreacher, and Hookey, and Rowling's "satirical" portrayal of Hermione's attempts to obtain fairer working conditions for them. Sulentic argues that "Rowling's resistance to Hermione's simplistic idea of justice captures a more complex idea of the dignity of the person" (205). I do not necessarily agree with all of Sulentic's argument, but I found it provocative in the best sense of making one think.

Part IV: The Wizard Economy

This is the shortest part in the book, with only three chapters. It is also, I daresay, the least interesting, though again personal preference doubtless goes a long way to determining that. I simply have little interest in economics. The first chapter, "Economic Growth in the Potterian Economy," by Avichai Snir and Daniel Levy, applies economic modeling to the *Potter* universe. I slogged through it because I felt it was my duty to do so, but if I were not reviewing the book, I would doubtless have skipped this chapter.

Both of the other two chapters in the part look at banking in the wizarding world. "The Magic of Money and Banking," by Eric J. Gouvin, focuses on the technical details of banking, looking at such issues as the difficulty of making change in an economy based exclusively on precious metals instead of paper money, and security. The other chapter, "Gringotts: The Role of Banks in Harry Potter's Wizarding World," by Heidi Mandanis Schooner, focuses more directly on Gringotts and the goblins that run it. There is considerable overlap between the two chapters, and it seems to me that they largely are redundant.

Part V: Harry Potter as an Archetype

This final part is the longest part of the book, with six chapters spanning 108 pages. It is also the most diverse part, covering a wide range of topics, and fortunately it contains some of the strongest chapters in the book. "Harry Potter Goes to Law School," by Lenora Ledwon, traces the similarities between the education given to aspiring wizards and witches at Hogwarts and that given to the aspiring lawyers at American law schools. I found it quite entertaining (particularly the comparison between Professor Snape and Professor Kingsfield in the book and film *The Paper Chase*) but it is hard for me to say whether someone who has not been to law school would find it as much so. In the same vein, "Which Spell: Learning to Think Like a Wizard," by Mary Beth Beazley, compares the teaching methods used at Hogwarts with those employed at law schools. She concludes that, while Hogwarts might do a better job of providing opportunities to practice magic than law schools do of providing opportunities to practice lawyering, law schools do a better job of teaching students to think like lawyers than Hogwarts does of teaching its students to think like wizards.

The next chapter takes a decidedly different turn: "Harry Potter as Client in a Lawsuit: Utilizing the Archetypal Hero's Journey as Part of Case Strategy," by Ruth Anne Robbins, which originally appeared in a slightly different form elsewhere. I found this chapter considerably less appealing than the previous two. While I agree with Robbins's emphasis on the importance of creating a strong narrative in presenting a client's case, and of presenting your client in a sympathetic light, I consider the concept of the client as an archetypal

hero to be overly melodramatic and disingenuous, an example of the type of gamesmanship that attorneys often exhibit that I find quite distasteful.

The book gets back on track with the next chapter, "Who Wants to Be a Muggle? The Diminished Legitimacy of Law as Magic," by Mark Edwin Burge. This chapter returns to the theme of lawyers as wizards, with a refreshingly realistic and clearheaded outlook. After quoting a conversation that Hermione has with Scrimgeor in which he asks her if she plans to pursue a career in Magical Law and she replies in the negative, adding that instead she is "hoping to do some good in the world," Burge notes that "we can quite reasonably view Harry Potter as a cautionary tale of the legal profession" (339). His warning against the tendency of lawyers to use legal obfuscation to create a wall between themselves and laypeople similar to the separation between wizards and muggles is well-taken.

"Agents of the Good, Servants of Evil: Harry Potter and the Law of Agency," by Daniel S. Kleinberger, presents issues of agency and employment law through examples from the *Harry Potter* narratives. This is another straightforward chapter, but the issues are interesting and well-presented.

The final chapter is "Professor Dumbledore's Wisdom and Advice," by Darby Dickerson. This is another chapter adapted from a law review article. Dickerson looks at Dumbledore as a role model not just for Harry and his colleagues but also for aspiring attorneys and others in the real world, because "most of his virtues were non-magical. In the end, Dumbledore is memorable because he cared. Indeed, if all of his advice could be summarized, it would be to care for others" (381-382). Fine advice for wizards, attorneys, and muggles alike.

Conclusion

Overall, *The Law and Harry Potter* is an interesting and entertaining collection for any serious fan of *Harry Potter*. The chapters are often erudite and full of references to serious legal concepts, but rarely if ever get so technical as to become incomprehensible to non-legal professionals. The serious ideas expressed in the book are well-balanced by a sense of fun, as indicated by the fact that many of the author bios contain tongue-in-cheek references to the author's credentials in the Potterverse as well as their real-world qualifications. It is a credit to Rowling that the series of "children's books" that she created could be the subject of such a strong selection of articles mostly written by legal academicians.

— Douglas C. Kane



MERLIN: KNOWLEDGE AND POWER THROUGH THE AGES. Stephen Knight. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009. xvii + 275pp. \$27.95. ISBN 9780801443657.

TRUE TO ITS REFRESHINGLY LUCID TITLE, THIS STUDY surveys the character of Merlin through artistic and cultural history, and posits a thematic consistency to his portrayals. Arthurian literature's oldest and possibly most iconic persona, and likely the world's most famous Cymro as well, he is investigated by Cardiff University's Distinguished Research Professor of English Literature Stephen Knight, whose first book on Arthurian cultural history was *Arthurian Literature and Society* (1983), and who demonstrated his approach to long-term character study with *Robin Hood: A Mythic Biography* (2003). Like Robin Hood, Merlin is something of an anomaly among medieval figures in that he continues in the modern day to be more often fictionalized than analyzed; there are surprisingly few serious, full-length, and up-to-date studies dedicated to the wizard-cum-prophet (for lack of a better catch-all), especially in comparison with the likes of Arthur himself, Beowulf, Roland/Orlando, and, to a lesser extent, Merlin's fellow Arthurian-adoptee Tristan. The book-jacket endorsement by Alan Lupack claims that *Merlin* "should become the standard resource on the well-known wizard"—a weighty compliment when one considers how substantial an outline to literature on Merlin can be found in Lupack's *Oxford Guide to Arthurian Literature and Legend* (2005). Knight presents his material most often in terms of a continuing story, and occasionally as a myth, though the distinction is never quite clear. One assumes that, by the latter, Knight is referring to the *mythos* of Merlin, which—as opposed to the entire corpus of often-contradictory developments and retellings—might be defined as the eclectic core-story of the character, composed of reconcilable elements from texts usually but not always deemed canonical.

Knight's *Merlin* approaches its eponymous figure from the earliest Celtic (primarily Welsh) literary sources, and traces its cultural uses and development through to 2008. This vast evolution and accretion Knight divides into four phases—and *Merlin* into four chapters—each characterizing a specific relationship Merlin's knowledge seems to manifest with respect to the nature of power. More specifically, the Introduction claims, "[t]his book will argue that when knowledge is most important, most close to taking control, that is when it is most vulnerable to some form of limitation or repression by power" (xi). In presenting this position as a continuum, Knight writes that

The story of Merlin, and in his first realization Myrddin, has been proceeding for about a thousand years, and to trace its recurrent realization of the conflict of knowledge and power will not only unearth a mass of intriguing detail [...] but more importantly will show how the

texts explore the mechanisms by which knowledge and power both face and confront each other over time. (xii)

The terms of the thesis are vague, and necessarily so; one can hardly claim to encircle a millennium of growth with a small fence. Though the succeeding chapters do much to give ‘knowledge’ and ‘power’ more specific and contextual values, the difficulties of a project such as *Merlin* are made clear from the beginning. Simply put, there seems too much material to be easily subjected to the formal restraints of a single study; constant tension can be felt between the specifics of the line of argument and the imaginative diversity of the fictional character’s development. Knight’s ability to keep this tension from constantly distorting his thousand-year survey is one of the foremost triumphs of *Merlin*.

The book proceeds historically in terms of extant material. Chapter One begins with a consideration of the sixth-century British bard-figure Myrddin as presented in a small number of manuscripts, and follows him into the character (and moniker) of Merlinus as reinvented and popularized by Geoffrey of Monmouth in *Historia Regum Britanniae* (c. 1138), as well as in the less-known *Vita Merlini* (c. 1148). The chapter argues that each of these early manifestations, although distinct in its own ways, portrays Myrddin/Merlin’s knowledge chiefly in terms of wisdom—that is, knowledge possessing a power of its own—and that “the person who bears this knowledge can be useful to, often crucial to, the operations of the powerful and is actively courted by them” (2). The earliest material poses no connection between Myrddin and Arthur, and Knight argues that the figure is originally based on a Cumbrian nobleman—“conceivably historical” (6)—whose special knowledge causes him to reject his society’s values, not to champion them. It is the later, post-invasion material—that on which Geoffrey draws most heavily—that portrays Merlin as a force for the Welsh reconquest of Britain, and sets the stage for almost everything the figure is to become. Despite this apparent schism, Knight stresses that portrayals of the early Myrddin/Merlin afford his knowledge consistent power over and sometimes above the social and natural worlds. Knight goes on to argue that little if any of this power is magical, however; even in *Historia Regum Britanniae*, Merlin’s apparent miracles of moving the stones of the Giants’ Ring from Ireland and disguising Uther as Gorlois can be read as feats of engineering and cosmetic skill, respectively. The chapter’s consideration of *Vita Merlini*—a complex work—is especially illuminating. Apart from highlighting several Celtic episodes Geoffrey seems to have reworked, Knight sees in the *Vita* the seeds of a much later, more autonomous and disruptive sort of soothsayer than the royal counsellor Merlin remains for several centuries yet.

Chapter Two, "Advice," looks at how medieval writers—primarily in French—harness Merlin's knowledge to the service of the powerful, and how the authority he represents ranges among the spiritual, military, and political spheres. Though Merlin experienced a sort of rebirth at the hands of Geoffrey, it is between the years of 1150 and 1485—those covered by this chapter—that Arthurian legend is most thoroughly recast, and its most recognizable characters and relationships come to be established. Nevertheless, the most famous Arthurian writer of the period, Chrétien de Troyes, had next to nothing to do with Merlin, and Knight takes the opportunity to press the influence of Robert de Boron, a Burgundian writer whose lack of poetic skill often overshadows his enormous contributions to the Arthurian mythos. Merlin becomes a Christian authority under Robert, "though still capable of looking after himself with the cunning of a true trickster" (57), while the expansive and consolidatory Vulgate Cycle (1215-35) finds new and beneficial applications for his knowledge, constituting a role which Knight calls that of a grand vizier. The eventual darkening of this ministry in the 'post-Vulgate' *Merlin* "looks forward to the isolated and vulnerable cleverness of the Renaissance mage" (80). For the final section of the chapter, Knight returns to England and explores Merlin's supervisory, sometimes fatherly, and occasionally non-existent roles among such works as Layamon's *Brut* (c.1200), the alliterative *Morte Arthure* (c. 1400), and Thomas Malory's *Morte Darthur* (1485).

Chapter Three surveys the portrayal of Merlin from the Renaissance to the Victorian periods. It involves a long and inclement stretch of cultural and political history which, despite an uptick in the nineteenth century (largely at the hands of Tennyson), might altogether be characterized as the nadir of Arthurian development. For the most part, the interval lacks the dignified literary cornerstones with which the first two chapters are built; as Knight observes, "up-to-date European intellectualism [...] had little time for Merlin" (102). Nevertheless, it is during this time that Merlin's special abilities are gradually refitted with the emerging scientific knowledge, and he comes at times to appear as a sort of Daedalus—clever and inventive, but neither omniscient nor invulnerable. Beginning with a cross-section of declining attitudes towards Merlin's prophecies and medieval modes of knowledge in general, Knight largely goes on to consider the propagandist-satirical back-and-forth of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century appropriations of Merlin, the most enduring of which remains the Tom Thumb material popularized by Henry Fielding. Perhaps surprisingly, the Romantics did not appear to find Merlin appealing enough to adopt, and Knight attributes this purported rejection to the figure's intricacies:

Michael the road-mender or the experience-scarred Ancient Mariner represented their idea of natural wisdom and—the key value which clever, complex, possibly diabolic Merlin could hardly represent—simple morality. (130)

Tennyson of course took up the wizard in his *Idylls of the King* (1833-85), as well as in some of the shorter Arthurian poems he wrote before and afterwards. The *Idylls's* "Merlin and Vivien" is the weightiest of these treatments, and, Knight argues, amounts effectively to a dismissal of Merlin in order to clear the way for the "moral focus and the world-engaged faith represented by Arthur" (145). Whereas much of *Merlin* proceeds on cultural history, Knight's analysis of "Merlin and Vivien" is based on close reading, and emphasizes Vivien's successful seduction of the magus as an indictment of both the man and the humanistic rationalism he is suggested to represent.

The fourth chapter characterizes the twentieth-century Merlin as overwhelmingly an educator, and Knight can hardly be debated in this position. As is so often the case with the modern sections of historical surveys, however, the pace and focus of *Merlin* sometimes reel beneath the sheer volume of material, as well as the absence of a thorough enough retrospection to winnow and process it. In tracing Merlin's maturation into a teacher, Knight finds an independent path on each side of the Atlantic, arguing that the magus was originally ridiculed in America, but came to be seen as "realizing the idea of knowledge and its social application, whether academic, democratic, or merely self-constructive, as a substantial feature of American life" (177). On the British side, the Merlins of Charles Williams and C.S. Lewis are figured, the latter much more fully. Though Williams has been called "among modern English poets, the foremost reshaper and recreator of Arthurian mythology," and one whose work "has not yet found the appreciation it deserves" (Göller and Thompson, 515, 517), it must be recalled that in his works he confers much of the traditional role of Merlin on Taliessin (sic). As a result, the hamadryad-like Merlin of Lewis's *That Hideous Strength* (1945) takes precedence, though Knight finds that the message—and possible influence of the book on George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-four* (1948)—has been obfuscated by publication issues (200). Knight sees Lewis as a sort of successor to T.H. White, whose work, like Williams's, "has yet to receive a critical analysis of the subtlety and range that he deserves as a major Arthurian" (198). It is in White's *Sword and the Stone* (1938) that one finds the basis for the Disneyfied wizard many children still meet first among Merlins. After touching upon numerous young-adult and fantasy incarnations of Merlin, the chapter concludes with attention to the postmodern and individualist recastings of the wizard that have come to appear in film, television, and international New-Age spiritualism.

Merlin is above all a pleasure to read. Knight's discussions are gentlemanly, his prose flawless, and his assessments lucid and engaging. His use of secondary literature is succinct yet ungratuitous, and his attention to the primary sources displays a felicitous balance of conventionality and novelty. It is because the thesis is uncontroversial that *Merlin* serves so well as a survey, as well as a future resource for more specialized studies. As is inevitably the case with imaginary characters, most difficulties are conceptual and methodological; a British study, *Merlin* shows no sign of the theoretical self-consciousness that characterizes and sometimes paralyzes much North American literary scholarship. Though likely part of its appeal for some readers, this absence has its own effects and assumptions, causing Knight to represent Merlin as a constantly-reappropriated object—as a restless spirit occasionally incarnate—rather than as a select combination of readers' conceptions and writers' performances, most having no acquaintance with one another. There are issues of epistemology as well, especially where the Merlin material seems ill-suited to form its own context; Myrddin's "querulous" isolation and ageing, for example, is part of an early Welsh literary tradition (Bromwich 423), while the absence of Merlin from the alliterative *Morte Arthure* can also be seen as part of that text's portrayal of a more naturalistic world than the prophet stood to represent. Any such concerns must answer to the project's scope, however, and one feels that the book could easily have surpassed a thousand pages or more should Knight have opened any more doors. This is particularly the case in the last chapter, which covers a period where Merlin seems to pop up everywhere (he is even in an episode of the original series of *Star Trek* ["Requiem for Methuselah"]), and Knight is forced to cover an average of five texts per page. Overall, however, *Merlin: Knowledge and Power through the Ages* is an admirable, professional study, and belongs on the shelf alongside other major studies of Arthuriana.

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—Harley J. Sims



TOLKIEN'S *THE LORD OF THE RINGS*: SOURCES OF INSPIRATION. Ed. by Stratford Caldecott and Thomas Honegger. Cormarë Series 18. Zurich and Jena: Walking Tree Publishers, 2008. [vi] + 237 pp. \$25.00. ISBN 978-3-905703-12-2.

WALKING TREE PUBLISHERS, WHOSE LOGO PICTURES AN ENT, established the Cormarë Series to further scholarly study of the writings of J.R.R. Tolkien. This book, eighteenth in the series, grew out of a conference organized by Exeter College, Oxford, in 2006 to celebrate and give institutional recognition to the emergence of Tolkien studies as a serious discipline, not limited to the Anglophone world, and one that is by nature, as Stratford Caldecott points out in his introduction, interdisciplinary. The volume includes a selection from the conference papers, supplemented by other essays. It exhibits both strengths and weaknesses of the "Proceedings" genre: most of the papers are quite readable, often marked by an engaging oral informality of style; the reader will find in them many fresh insights; but both the tone and the quality are uneven, and the collection as a whole lacks a clear focus. An index would have revealed greater unity than is easily detected, but making good indexes takes time.

From the title, I was expecting studies of earlier writers who in one way or another contributed to Tolkien's creative work, but I soon found that its subject-matter is more varied, including attention to nonliterary influences and essays on Vico and Nietzsche, with whose work, it is acknowledged at the outset, Tolkien is not likely to have been familiar. The introduction even takes the title phrase in the opposite direction, briefly considering Tolkien himself as a source of inspiration in, for example, the Harry Potter series; but Caldecott's primary theme in those pages is the question of the academic status of Tolkien studies. He seems to me overly diffident on the matter, but perhaps the issue looms larger in Britain than it does in the United States.

The ten essays are arranged in three parts, starting with ones designated "Biographical." John Garth describes his contribution, "Tolkien, Exeter College and the Great War," as a supplement to his book *Tolkien and the Great War* (which received a scholarship award at the 2004 Mythcon). It presents a fair amount of new research, for example from memoirs and unpublished documents. Its twenty-three short sections cover Tolkien's undergraduate career—focusing mainly on the nonacademic aspects—and the impact of the war (begun while he was still enrolled) on Exeter College. They run from accounts of various escapades of adolescent high-jinks to more serious literary matters and a section on "Exeter's war dead," deeply elegiac in tone, before a final assessment of "Tolkien's legacy." Verlyn Flieger in her essay, "Gilson, Smith, and Baggins," continues the elegiac mood with touching sensitivity. Gilson and Smith were two of Tolkien's close friends from schooldays—two of the self-styled "immortal four"—who lost their lives in France, and Tolkien's grief, Flieger says, somehow

became a permanent part of his makeup, transmuted through long meditation into one aspect of his creative genius. Death and immortality are major themes in his life's work (and not merely the immortality of being celebrated in song, though that is important too). He confronts us, as he himself had been confronted, with the mystery of divine purpose in the survival of one person together with the premature loss of another. Even Frodo Baggins, though technically he survived, was too damaged to remain long in earthly life. Flieger's suggestion that in Sam's famous closing speech, "I'm back," we try putting the emphasis on the first word rather than the second is not entirely whimsical. Between these two pieces is the second essay, or rather three mini-essays in one, in which Peter Gilliver, Edmund Weiner, and Jeremy Marshall offer "Perspectives on Tolkien as Lexicographer and Philologist." Like Garth, they expand on portions of *their* book, *The Ring of Words* (2006). Gilliver gives some details on Tolkien's work with two of his mentors at the New English Dictionary, William Craigie and Henry Bradley, and with Kenneth Sisam on other linguistic projects, some completed and some abortive. Weiner's section explores the way words stimulated Tolkien's creative imagination, words encountered in two writers of an earlier generation, Charles Kingsley and William Morris, and even in an Icelandic dictionary and an Old English grammar. Marshall shows that the alternative plural *dwarves*, with a *v*, has a better pedigree in English than is usually thought and suggests that Tolkien was unnecessarily apologetic about his choice of the form. These three opening chapters are all, each in its own way, stocked with fascinating facts and instructive insights.

Part 2, "Mythos and Modernity," is more problematic. What the three essays have in common is an interest in relating Tolkien to contemporary trends in philosophy, especially those that call into question the dominance of Enlightenment thought. Patrick Curry explores the concept of enchantment in Tolkien's thought and in his narratives, as contrasted with the mood of disenchantment that has characterized much of modernism. I have found Curry's other writings on Tolkien quite readable, but here his argument is hard to follow (at least, for me). On the key term, it is difficult to trace the route leading from Tolkien's and Max Weber's remarks about *enchantment* to the four characteristics listed by Curry (101–2) or to catch the connection between Tolkien's theoretical statements and his personal experiences that Curry selects as paradigmatic. Nor does he explain why he considers the experience of enchantment incompatible with theological commitment. In short, we are offered a series of *obiter dicta* in place of a line of careful reasoning. Yet for all that, Curry's essay contains much food for thought. "The Affirmation of Myth against the Tyranny of Reason" is the subtitle of the essay by the Polish Inklings scholar Marek Oziewicz. He notes interesting similarities between Giovanni Battista Vico (1668–1744) and J.R.R. Tolkien—both were philologists whose life work was to

build large systems on a belief in the value of language, at a time when such belief was fatally unfashionable, and both were therefore marginalized by the intellectual Establishment but in the last thirty years or so have gained wider appreciation. He then devotes most of his essay to “deep[er] parallels”: both “offered a viable humanist philosophical alternative to [...] oppressive modernity and [...] affirmed the value of myth” (121–22). Peter M. Candler, Jr., compares Tolkien with yet another philologist in “Frodo or Zarathustra: Beyond Nihilism in Tolkien and Nietzsche.” But here the differences loom larger than the parallels, though Candler’s starting point is the opposition of both thinkers to modernity and its elevation of the mechanical over the beautiful. They advocate opposite remedies, however. Tolkien’s involves art—“sub-creation,” an idea that he developed in the context of his Christian faith—and eschatological hope. For Nietzsche, given his notion of eternal recurrence—of which, for Candler, Sauron’s One Ring is “an image” (158)—creation is illusory and power is the only answer to modern nihilism. Tolkien’s is the larger vision, with room even for valorizing pagan ideals (with due allowance for their imperfectness) and for final joy.

Already in Candler’s essay we note increasing attention to the Christian underpinnings of Tolkien’s thought, and this becomes dominant in the four essays in Part 3, “Mythos and Logos.” That the preferred term frequently is “Catholic” rather than “Christian” (though biographically it is accurate enough) seems to me a trifle tendentious given the essential catholicity (small c) of many aspects of his worldview. But set that aside. Leon Pereira, O.P., is concerned chiefly in his essay, “Morals Makyth Man—and Hobbit,” with the Christian foundations of Tolkien’s work and particularly of the ethics implicit in his hobbit heroes’ behavior. His focus on the virtues of pity and love links this essay nicely with the one preceding, since Nietzsche had no use for such softness. Crucial to Pereira’s argument are Tolkien’s own statements, largely found in letters, about what motivated his work and how it should be interpreted. “Tolkien, Chesterton, and Thomism” is the title of Alison Milbank’s contribution. “Chestertonian philosophy undergirds Tolkien’s Middle-earth” (187), she argues. Tolkien’s invented world in its “density and completeness of realisation” (190) reflects the metaphysics of Aquinas, as mediated by not only Chesterton but also Jacques Maritain and his followers in the Ditchling artistic community. She does not explore the possibility of Tolkien’s more direct acquaintance with St. Thomas through his professional study of medieval culture, but the case for Chesterton’s influence is bolstered by a striking verbal parallel in “A Long-expected Party.” Milbank also finds traces of Thomist esthetics in Tolkien’s portrayals of such artificers as Niggle, Aulë, Eänor, Galadriel and her people, and Sauron. “The Influence of Holiness: The Healing Power of Tolkien’s Narrative,” by Guglielmo Spirito, O.F.M. Conv., is not so much an academic paper as a wide-ranging and

eye-opening meditation on several of Tolkien's key ideas and images: light, joy, holiness, mystery, and the truth of myth. Oddly, in the "References" one book by Rowan Williams is correctly listed but another is listed, and cited (199n), under "Rowan" as a surname. Perhaps Spirito recalls one of Tolkien's favorite trees? Finally, Caldecott in a wrap-up paper called "Tolkien's Project" writes of Tolkien's "sense of mission to [...] 'rescue'" (216) the true "England" from the materialism and (already in the 1940s) globalization that he believed threatened it. (We may compare the struggle between "Logres" and "Britain" in the symbol system of his fellow-Inklings Williams and Lewis.) He longed for England to be "scoured"—like the Shire (he faults the Peter Jackson film for excising that episode). For him the marriage of Sam Gamgee and Rosie Cotton, and their homage to Elvishness in naming their daughter Elanor, points toward a hoped-for restoration of the "[balance] of the metaphysical masculine and feminine principles" and a rediscovery of "moral depths and cosmic significance within the domestic world" (230).

By way of "Conclusion," his coeditor, Thomas Honegger, returns briefly to the subject of the future of Tolkien studies. He cites an impressive outpouring of scholarship in the past decade, "strong foundations" on which to build, and anticipates the opening of "new areas of study" and the continuation of "mutually inspiring dialogue" (236) through more conferences like the one at Exeter College.

— Charles A. Huttar



ONE EARTH, ONE PEOPLE: THE MYTHOPOEIC FANTASY SERIES OF URSULA K. LE GUIN, LLOYD ALEXANDER, MADELEINE L'ENGLE AND ORSON SCOTT CARD. By Marek Oziewicz. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2008. Critical Explorations in Science Fiction and Fantasy 6. Donald E. Palumbo and C. W. Sullivan III, series editors. 271 pp. \$35.00. 978-0786431359.

NOW THAT MAREK OZIEWICZ'S *ONE EARTH, ONE PEOPLE* has won the Mythopoeic Society's 2010 Scholarship Award, it behooves me to produce the review I promised more than a year ago. The full title of the work describes the contents of the study clearly—*One Earth, One People: The Mythopoeic Fantasy Series of Ursula K. Le Guin, Lloyd Alexander, Madeleine L'Engle and Orson Scott Card*. Oziewicz's overriding thesis is that mythopoeic fantasy as he defines it and as it is exemplified by these writers will create a new paradigm for human behavior, "shaping a modern mythology that unifies the human race" (9).

In the first four chapters of the book, the author establishes his definitions and critical assumptions, beginning with the difficulty of defining fantasy. Borrowing from Brian Attebery's *Strategies of Fantasy*, he discusses the difference between fantasy as a mode or worldview and fantasy as a genre. He then focuses on a specific subgenre of fantasy that he labels "mythopoeic fantasy," which he calls "a unique literary expression of a worldview that assumes the existence of the supernatural" (4). Specifically, mythopoeic fantasy is

a holistic, soul-nurturing type of narrative capable of addressing vital psychological, cultural and aesthetic needs which are disregarded by most other forms of contemporary literature. [...] [T]he secondary worlds that mythopoeic fantasy employs are morally charged universes in which human actions are meaningful and may suggest a paradigm for a creative and fulfilling life in the real world. [...] [T]he core structural marker of the genre is mythopoesis—a deliberate embedding of the story in the conventions of myth and mythmaking—which allows it to suggest a poetic and intuitive perception of reality. (8)

Thus, two of the author's primary assumptions are that fantasy can unify humanity and that studying one subgenre of fantasy is more fruitful than discussing the broader category. Oziewicz's other primary assumption is that reductionist approaches to literature (i.e. Marxism, Freudianism, structuralism, and other *-isms* that break literature down into elementary components) are hostile to fantasy whereas fantasy blossoms under holistic approaches (the whole is greater than the sum of its parts). All three assumptions are the subject of the first four chapters, after which the author turns to individual chapters on the works of Le Guin, Alexander, L'Engle, and Card. The chapter titles indicate Oziewicz's approach to each writer: the Le Guin chapter is called "Rediscovering Harmony," the Alexander chapter is "Bridging the Past with the Future," L'Engle's chapter is "Integrating Science and Spirituality," and the Card discussion is "Reconnecting with Nature." Each writer contributes to a different aspect of Oziewicz's new paradigm for humanity.

As a work of scholarship, *One Earth, One People* has both strengths and weaknesses. The greatest strength is the extensive research underlying the work. I am often critical of scholarly writers who cobble together a few sources and consider their research finished. When it comes to research, however, Oziewicz is a true scholar. He has read every book and article related to his topics and has searched out unpublished dissertations as well. Since he also summarizes most of these sources, his book provides a crash course in fantasy criticism. As useful as the summaries are, they do become repetitive several chapters into the book. Oziewicz includes snippets of quotations from his sources, mixed freely with his

own comments, and occasionally the multitude of voices becomes confusing. But I quibble. The bibliography is extensive and thorough—a treasure trove for new scholars in the fantasy field. Chapter 8, on Orson Scott Card, has the weakest scholarly support in that Oziewicz approaches Card's fantasy from an ecocritical perspective, which is not within his usual purview. A colleague who specializes in ecocriticism tells me that Oziewicz's sources are outdated. However, this is a minor criticism of what is a masterly job of research.

One aspect of the book that I appreciate is Oziewicz's attitude towards children's fantasy and children's literature criticism. As a specialist in children's literature, I am accustomed to critics from other fields taking a patronizing stance towards writers and scholars who work in children's literature and young adult literature. Oziewicz lives up to his holistic claims by considering all literature as One. Not once does he hint that children's literature is in any way lesser. Since fantasy, like children's literature, is often considered on the fringes of mainstream literature, one might think that Oziewicz is offering professional courtesy. However, science fiction, also a fringe specialty, is rife with scholarship that looks down on children's literature.

Oziewicz's writing style is functional rather than beautiful, but his prose is accessible to scholars and to an educated public. He is particularly adept at translating the jargon of literary theory into terms a general reader can understand. On a more critical note, the entire book and its individual chapters use a rudimentary structure: "First tell them what you're going to say, then say it, then tell them what you said." The advantage to such a basic organization is that the reader never gets lost. However, this approach was developed for oral presentations, not writing, and even public speaking has moved on to more complex approaches. Writing instructors look for more subtlety in organization.

One of my main problems with *One Earth, One People* is that the publisher seems to have foregone copy editing. Many of the typographical errors that pepper the book would have been caught by a good copy editor. Oziewicz often leaves out a word or types in the wrong one. When this occurs in a direct quote, the meaning of the original can be changed. But perhaps I am overreacting to the minor errors because at one point Oziewicz gets the title of one of my books wrong.

My biggest objection is to the main thesis of the book, exemplified in the title: *One Earth, One People*. Oziewicz argues that mythopoeic fantasy will create a new paradigm that unites the world. I have nothing against idealism and optimism, but this thesis sounds like the platform of a naïve Miss America competitor. The mystic, holistic strain of fantasy has been with us for centuries, its adherents always expecting a change in human nature. But that change has never arrived. Fantasy, both as worldview and genre, appeals to a minority, and no matter how enthusiastic we are, we will never persuade the majority to read

fantasy, let alone to adopt a new paradigm of spiritual unity based on mythopoeic fantasy.

—Donna R. White



WAR OF THE FANTASY WORLDS: C.S. LEWIS AND J.R.R. TOLKIEN ON ART AND IMAGINATION. Martha C. Sammons. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2010. xv + 237 pp. \$44.95. 978-0-313-36282-8.

IN 1980, MARTHA C. SAMMONS published a short book titled *A Guide Through C.S. Lewis' Space Trilogy* (Westchester, IL: Cornerstone Books). In the then absence of any more in-depth surveys of the topic, it provided a useful brief handbook to the mythological references in the trilogy. (Sammons later incorporated it and a similar but less unparalleled survey of the *Chronicles of Narnia* into a larger book, *A Far-Off Country: A Guide to C.S. Lewis's Fantasy Fiction* [Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2000].)

In *War of the Fantasy Worlds*, Sammons has a similar aim: to provide in one place, clearly and straightforwardly, and in direct comparison and contrast, Lewis's and Tolkien's views on the nature and purpose of fantasy literature, drawing on their essays, letters, and creative works. Successive chapters are devoted to different aspects of this subject: the authors' creative processes; their views on the audience for, the message of, and the value of fantasy literature; literary theories that influenced them; and their techniques of portraying secondary worlds and the contrast of good and evil in their fiction. Sammons is not always clear about the differences among her chapters; for instance, chapter two, which is largely drawn from the sections of Tolkien's "On Fairy-Stories" about the audience for fairy tales, is introduced as covering "the value and purpose of fairy tales and fantasy" (21), while chapter seven, largely drawn from the sections of the same essay on recovery, escape, and consolation, is introduced as covering "the value of fantasy and myth" (165). Organization is also sometimes awkward: views on science fiction are in chapter two, next to fairy tales, while the nuts and bolts of secondary world creation, closely allied to science fiction, go in chapter five, and the use of those secondary worlds to depict good and evil goes back in chapter three, while the Christian element of the work, which the depiction of good and evil expresses, is in chapter six, next to allegory.

Despite its organizational difficulties, the book can serve a purpose for a reader as deeply familiar with Lewis's and Tolkien's own theoretical writings and fiction as Sammons obviously is. She has clearly read and absorbed all these

works; virtually every sentence summarizes a point made by Lewis or Tolkien and is footnoted. Occasional reference to the secondary literature shows that Sammons has read widely here and has a good discrimination on which critics to cite. She may be correct that there is no other single book that covers both authors' views on all aspects of this subject in such detail.

For such a specialized and knowledgeable reader, then, this volume can be a useful reference to browse through to remind yourself of the more vivid and detailed language of Lewis and Tolkien that you already know well, and for which you just need a brief *aide-mémoire* to refresh yourself. This book adds nothing to original scholarship, but it could serve as that *aide-mémoire*.

The problem comes if anybody else tries to read or use it. Sammons knows and understands her sources, unquestionably, and she makes few raw factual errors. What she is incapable of doing is writing about her subject in a way that will make sense to anyone who doesn't already know what she is writing about. Her literary style resembles the condensed, cryptic form of class lecture notes, intended to be read only by the person who wrote them up, and is incomprehensible to anybody else except another student who remembers the same lectures.

Sammons has a talent for summaries and rephrases of Tolkien's and Lewis's ideas that, read as she writes them, merely confuse. In "On Fairy-Stories," Tolkien compares the enchantment of fairy-stories to the enchantment of a cricket game for a true enthusiast; Sammons, puzzlingly, writes, "Entering the secondary world is like playing a cricket game," as if Tolkien had meant that the game were like a fairy-tale, and follows this with cryptic summary of Tolkien's explication (120). Sammons is particularly skilled at penning opaque descriptions of the authors' fiction. Sometimes, particularly in the opening chapter, this leads her into factual errors. (Notably a reference to "the twelve-volume *The Silmarillion*" [4], apparently confusing it with *The History of Middle-earth*.)

A long section on *The Silmarillion* (45-52), while showing an understanding of Tolkien's complex sub-creation, is absolutely packed with ambiguities which would leave any reader not equally familiar with it totally at sea. Sammons throws around Elvish ethnic terms with complete disregard for how they fit together, ending with the implication that the Quendi are one small subgroup of Elves (48). She discusses the Númenóreans before telling us who they are (49). Elsewhere, she describes Tolkien's writing process in *The Lord of the Rings* without mentioning that it's *The Lord of the Rings* that she is discussing (121). She informs us that in Lewis's Space Trilogy, "Each planet was given an Oyarsa, an angelic spirit, to rule" (52), which sounds like the planet is ruling the Oyarsa and not the other way around, assuming that "rule" is an adequate verb for Oyarsa's role at all. Possibly the single most unpackable sentence in the entire

book is, "Most of Niggle's paintings are too large and ambitious because he is better at painting leaves than entire trees" (84). This is actually technically accurate. But, as expressed here, it makes no sense whatever.

Though part of Sammons's purpose is to compare Lewis and Tolkien, opportunities to do this are scant. There is little straight comparison, and it is superficial. The same writing flaws keep cropping up, as well. Sammons states that "both writers have been described as having divided selves" (3), but does not add that, while Lewis lived a compartmentalized life, Tom Shippey and others have noted that there are few examples of men with scholarly and creative personae so closely interwoven as Tolkien. A note that "In contrast to Tolkien, [Lewis's Space Trilogy] has more biblical echoes, but, like Tolkien, echoes the Book of Genesis" (52), is almost as walleyed as the sentence about "Leaf by Niggle," clumsily implying as it does that the Bible and the Book of Genesis are two separate works. There are ways the intended subtle point could be made without falling over itself, but Sammons cannot find them.

Comparing the authors' writing style—the only useful such comparison in the book, but still without depth—Sammons criticizes Tolkien's intrusive narrator in *The Hobbit* for "destroying the sense that this is a separate secondary world" (133), and then turns around and praises Lewis's intrusive narrator in the *Chronicles of Narnia* because this "narrative technique helps guides reader responses and reminds them this is a story" (136). How the same technique towards the same end is a flaw in the one author and praiseworthy in the other is not explained.

Much of the description is flat and superficial. There are a few inane little flowcharts depicting the creative process, and one completely baffling flowchart (67). The discussion of sub-creation (chapter 5) focuses on small details with little consideration of the higher or deeper artistic purpose of creating these, and offers no correlation with the artistic theories that are the book's ostensible theme. The whole chapter feels like an awkward insert. A section on Tolkien's use of light as a metaphor (97-102) reads particularly flatly in comparison with Verlyn Flieger's profound discussion in *Splintered Light*, a book Sammons cites. Her summary of Lewis's three ways of writing for children (30-31) adds nothing to Lewis's own clear, succinct essay. Sammons's professed aim of considering a large swath of intellectual territory in one volume is worth little when its component sections are so much better handled elsewhere.

This volume is not without value. But its value is extremely limited, as a convenient reference source for advanced students only.

– David Bratman



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JOE R. CHRISTOPHER is Professor *emeritus* of English at Tarleton State University, Stephenville TX. He has published two books (one in collaboration) on C.S. Lewis, published one chapbook of Tolkienian verse, been an assistant editor of *Truths Breathed Through Silver: The Inklings' Moral and Mythopoeic Legacy* (ed. Jonathan B. Himes, Cambridge Scholars, 2008), and edited three books and one issue of a journal. He also has published essays on Lewis, Tolkien, Charles Williams, Dorothy L. Sayers, Anthony Boucher, Ellery Queen, John Dickson Carr, Poul Anderson, Robert A. Heinlein, Isaac Asimov, Gene Wolfe, and various other popular writers—as well as such standard authors as the Pearl Poet, Shakespeare, Coleridge, Hawthorne, Tennyson, and John Heath-Stubbs—and well over 100 poems. He had one play—a farce about a vampire—produced at his university, and he has signed a contract for the publication of a book of poems from The Edwin Mellen Press, probably out later this year.

CHARLES A. HUTTAR is Professor of English Emeritus at Hope College. He has written extensively on the Inklings as well as editing *Imagination and the Spirit* (1971) and co-editing two volumes that have received the Mythopoeic Scholarship Award in Inklings Studies, *Word and Story in C.S. Lewis* and *The Rhetoric of Vision: Essays in Charles Williams*. His most recent collection is *Scandalous Truths: Essays by and about Susan Howatch*.

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Apart from several scholarly reviews, he has also written popular articles on Batman, *Beowulf*, and the *Twilight* series. His website is at www.harleyjsims.webs.com.

DONNA R. WHITE is the author of *A Century of Welsh Myth in Children's Literature* and *Dancing with Dragons: Ursula K. Le Guin and the Critics*, and she has co-edited books on Diana Wynne Jones, J. M. Barrie, and Kenneth Grahame. She teaches science fiction and fantasy, young adult literature, children's literature, graphic novels, Celtic Studies, and composition at Arkansas Tech University.



BOOKS AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW

THE RING AND THE CROSS: CHRISTIANITY AND THE LORD OF THE RINGS. Ed. Paul Kerry. Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 2011.

THE MAGICAL WORLD OF THE INKLINGS. Gareth Knight. 2nd ed. Skylight Press, 2010.

ZOMBIES, VAMPIRES, AND PHILOSOPHY. Ed. Richard Greene and K. Silem Mohammad. Open Court, 2010

THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA AND PHILOSOPHY. Ed. Gregory Bassham and Jerry L. Walls. Open Court, 2005. (A bit old, but we never reviewed it before.)

HARRY POTTER AND PHILOSOPHY. Ed. David Baggett and Shawn E. Klein. Open Court, 2004.

Monsters, Marvels, and Minstrels: The Rise of Modern Medievalism



art by Jef Murray

Mythcon 42

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