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Editorial

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EDITORIAL

This issue of *Mythlore* features a number of “paired” articles—two articles on similar topics which, when read together, offer interesting (and sometimes opposing!) insights into themes, characters, controversial issues, and influences.

We lead off with two essays on medieval themes in the works of C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien. Alison Searle writes on the imagined medievalism of Lewis’s *That Hideous Strength* and the Narnia books, and shows how it reaches the integrated level of myth in the latter while remaining on a more allegorical level in the former. Colleen Donnelly examines Tolkien’s themes of service and stewardship, finding a model for the social order of Middle-earth in medieval feudalism and fealty.

Next we look at the role of women in the works of Tolkien and Lewis. Candice Fredrick and Sam McBride, co-authors of *Women Among the Inklings*, examine women in combat in a number of their works, finding that their portrayals have one thing in common: battles are ugly when women fight. Hatcher offers an opposing viewpoint on the “taming” of the woman warrior in Tolkien, suggesting that Éowyn’s rejection of the warrior’s life is a fulfillment of Tolkien’s theme of healing and rebirth rather than a subjection to a male partner.

The Peter Jackson films are the subject of the next two papers. R.D. Hall shows how Jackson’s *Lord of the Rings* trilogy makes more sense “read” as horror than fantasy, drawing on definitions of horror from film theory and on Jackson’s own previous work. Allison Harl applies the theory of the “gaze” to the audience’s interpretation of the film, emphasizing Tolkien’s own characterization of the power of the hypnotic gaze of many of his monsters. Both offer interesting new ways of examining just what it is that makes so many people uncomfortable with the films – and makes so many other people love them.

Our next two papers focus on Galadriel. Susan Carter looks at her role in the text of *The Lord of the Rings* – specifically at what is *not* revealed about her there – finding parallels with the treatment of Morgan le Fey in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, one of the Middle English texts with which Tolkien was most associated as a scholar. Romuald Ian Lakowski fills in some of the gaps Carter describes with a close examination of Galadriel’s history throughout the development of Tolkien’s legendarium, and particularly Tolkien’s evolving conception of her rebellion and redemption.

The authors of our final paired papers both examine the influence of authors on one another. Robert Boenig leads off with a look at roots of Lewis’s

Prince Caspian in William Morris's *Child Christopher and Goldilind the Fair* (and in turn Morris's source in *Havelok the Dane*), investigating the "imaginatively redemptive" changes Lewis made to this source material. William Grey, building on the theoretical framework of Harold Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence*, traces a path of influence and "anxiety" from George MacDonald through C.S. Lewis to Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* trilogy.

We finish with three unrelated papers. Daniel Peretti applies folk-tale analysis tools to the climactic Mount Doom scene of *The Lord of the Rings*, finding intriguing roots in the "ogre blinded" motif most familiar to readers from the Polyphemus episode of *The Odyssey*. Paul W. Lewis offers a comparison of Tolkien's Beorn and Tom Bombadil, assessing their functions in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, their characters, and their importance, although they are tangential in their stories, to Tolkien's themes.

Our final paper is a major essay on Lewis and the "meaning of meaning" by Charlie W. Starr. This paper leads us through some challenging philosophical concepts under Lewis's guidance, and through its discussion of myth, allegory, and truth, in a way brings us back full circle to our lead article's ideas about the influence of medieval thought on Lewis's fiction.

With this issue we reinstitute occasional reviews. Anyone interested in writing reviews for *Mythlore*, please contact the editor with a specific title you would like to review or topics and specialties you would be available to review in the future.

Our next issue, 99/100, will mark a milestone for *Mythlore*—our 100th issue since the journal began publication in January, 1969. This special issue will include several major papers on the Inklings as a group. We also hope to be able to announce the publication of an index to issues 1-100. With reluctance, we must institute a price increase starting September 1, 2007. Due to rising postage costs, all subscription categories will be increased by \$5.00 each. We encourage current subscribers to lock in their present rates by renewing now.

This issue includes the last of the papers accepted under Dr. Ted Sherman's editorship. I would like to thank Ted once again for his work in making *Mythlore* what it is today and easing my transition into the post of editor. I'd also like to thank the readers on our editorial board.

Finally, we are saddened to note the passing of Candice Fredrick, co-author with Sam McBride of *Women Among the Inklings* and "Battling the Woman Warrior" in this volume, on December 27, 2006.

—Janet Brennan Croft