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Editorial

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Editorial

Theodore James Sherman

ONE of the goals I set for myself when I volunteered to edit *Mythlore* was to publish it on a quarterly schedule. Thus far, I have failed to achieve that goal and have let you, the readers, down. For that failure, I apologize. I will attempt to do better in 2003.

One reason for that failure involves the task of editing. Once an article is recommended by a reviewer and the author sends the final version, that article then undergoes a quite thorough process of editing. When I prepare an article for publication I always 1) correct grammar errors, 2) edit for style, 3) correct obvious factual errors, 4) double-check all references and quotations, 5) send proofs and galleys to all authors for final approval, and 6) proofread the final version twice. This process is necessary because I want *Mythlore* to be the premier journal for Inklings studies. Needless to say, these are difficult and tedious tasks, especially when, as sometimes occurs, the authors are not native speakers of English. Even when authors are native English-speakers, they are still fallible and often do not verify all their quotations, make sure that all quoted authors are in the works cited, or accurately employ MLA style. Thus, I will continue to do the best job I can to produce a journal that reflects well on The Mythopoeic Society and that is of a calibre befitting our authors. A second reason for the slowness in publishing *Mythlore* has been a lack of sufficient and scholarly submissions to publish on a quarterly schedule. It has taken until now to build up a sufficient number of approved articles to have future issues in the pipeline. For example, I now have enough articles for issues 91-92, I have 8-10 submissions out for review, and I am receiving new submissions at the rate of one every one or two weeks (usually 50-75% of the submissions are accepted).

A second goal I and the Council of Stewards had was to transform *Mythlore* from a fanzine into a scholarly journal. That transformation entailed more than just a change in format, although that was the first change I made. Initiating a review process where before there was none was not easy. I had to recruit a team of scholars to act as reviewers who would take the task seriously and give objective and detailed evaluations of each submission. Some authors have responded negatively to this process, but the overwhelming majority have been supportive--with some even commenting that *Mythlore's* reviewers and editor have given them

better and more detailed suggestions than they ever received elsewhere. Nor was it easy to bring along the *Mythlore* readers on this venture, especially those who wanted the journal to remain a fanzine. The results of this process have been encouraging, however, for the number of subscriptions has increased from a little over 400 to nearly 500; the majority of submissions are now from scholars in the fields of Inklings and mythopoeic/fantasy studies; and scholars are now beginning to view *Mythlore* as the journal of first choice in which to be published.

That is where *Mythlore* now stands. Where *Mythlore* goes from here is largely up to you the readers. I foresee being able to publish at least two issues of *Mythlore* in 2003. To put *Mythlore* on a quarterly publication schedule (or even three times a year) for 2004 or 2005 necessitates an increased number of solid, scholarly submissions, because to sustain that kind of publishing schedule means I need enough accepted articles on hand for 4-6 future issues.

So, here is what *Mythlore* needs from you: it needs a steady stream of submissions: articles, letters, and book reviews. I currently have several book reviews that will be published in the next two to three issues. Moreover, in 2003 I plan to resurrect the Inklings Bibliography, which will be a listing of all works (books, essays, reviews, etc.) published about the Inklings in a given time period. At the outset, this bibliography will not be annotated. My hope is that this bibliography will enable more readers to locate hard to find articles and books and to engage in writing their own articles and book reviews. The reviewers and I would like to encourage submissions on the Harry Potter series, Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* series, and other new acclaimed mythopoeic fantasy fiction and film. We also encourage critiques and analyses of the Harry Potter and *Lord of the Rings* films, especially those that treat the film representations as literature.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank several people without whom I could not produce *Mythlore*. Professors Verlyn Flieger, Charles Huttar, Barbara Reynolds, Peter Schakel, Richard West, and Donna White give me invaluable advice and recommendations regarding the direction and contents of *Mythlore*. They are due the credit for *Mythlore's* newfound scholarly status. Three other individuals need to be thanked, for it is their support of my work that allows me to edit *Mythlore*: Dr. William J. Connelly, Chair of the Department of English at Middle Tennessee State University; Dr. John McDaniel, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts at Middle Tennessee State University; and Dr. Sidney McPhee, President of Middle Tennessee State University. To all of you: Thank you.