

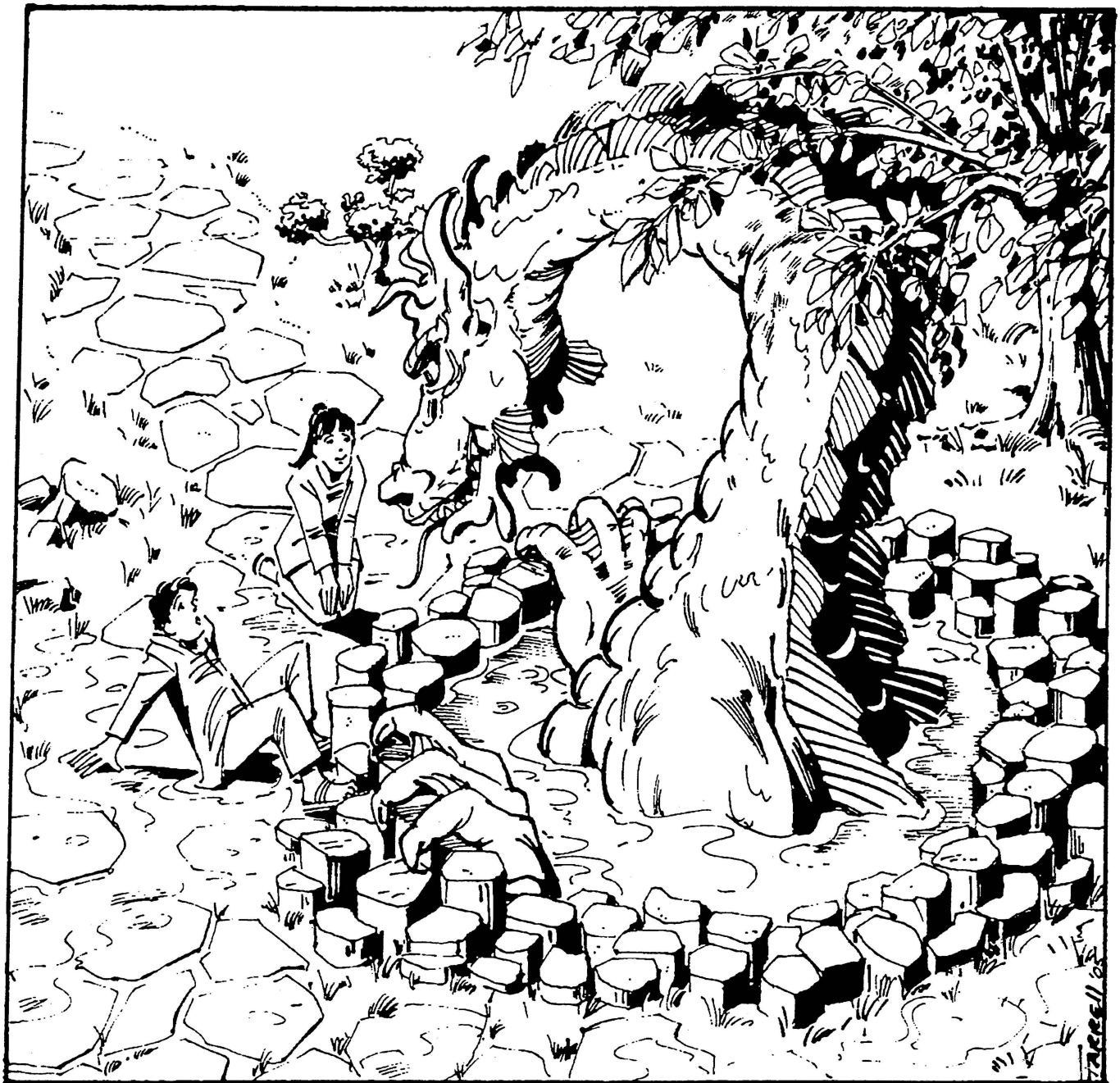
# MYTHPRINT

The Monthly Bulletin of the Mythopoeic Society

Vol. 43 Nos. 5-6

May/June 2006

Whole Nos. 290-291



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## Illustrations

Cover: “The Serpent Pool” by Kevin Farrell © 2005

“Shirriff” by Sylvia Hunnewell © 1994 (p. 18)

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See inside back cover

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



# 2006 Mythopoeic Awards Finalists

## Mythopoeic Fantasy Award, Adult Literature

Margaret Atwood, *The Penelopiad* (Canongate)  
Lois McMaster Bujold, *The Hallowed Hunt* (Eos)  
Neil Gaiman, *Anansi Boys* (William Morrow)  
Tanith Lee, *Metallic Love* (Bantam Spectra)  
Tim Pratt, *The Strange Adventures of Rangergirl* (Bantam Spectra)

## Mythopoeic Fantasy Award, Children's Literature

Holly Black, *Valiant* (Simon & Schuster)  
Diane Duane, *Wizards at War* (Harcourt)  
Clare B. Dunkle, *By These Ten Bones* (Henry Holt)  
Jonathan Stroud, *The Bartimaeus Trilogy*, consisting of *The Amulet of Samarkand*, *The Golem's Eye*,  
and *Ptolemy's Gate* (Miramax)

## Mythopoeic Scholarship Award for Inklings Studies

Marjorie Burns, *Perilous Realms: Celtic and Norse in Tolkien's Middle-earth* (University of Toronto Press, 2005)  
Verlyn Flieger, *Interrupted Music: The Making of Tolkien's Mythology* (Kent State University Press, 2005)  
Verlyn Flieger, ed., *Smith of Wootton Major: Expanded Edition* by J.R.R. Tolkien (HarperCollins, 2005)  
Wayne G. Hammond and Christina Scull, *The Lord of the Rings: A Reader's Companion*  
(Houghton Mifflin, 2005)  
Alan Jacobs, *The Narnian: The Life and Imagination of C.S. Lewis* (HarperSanFrancisco, 2005)

## Mythopoeic Scholarship Award for Myth and Fantasy Studies

Jerry Griswold, *The Meanings of "Beauty and the Beast"* (Broadview Press, 2004)  
Deborah O'Keefe, *Readers in Wonderland* (Continuum, 2003)  
David R. Loy and Linda Goodhew, *The Dharma of Dragons and Daemons:  
Buddhist Themes in Modern Fantasy* (Wisdom, 2004)  
Jennifer Schacker, *National Dreams: The Remaking of Fairy Tales  
in Nineteenth-Century England* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003)

The winners of this year's awards will be announced at the banquet during Mythcon 37 in Norman, Oklahoma, from August 4–7, 2006. A complete list of Mythopoeic Award winners is available on the Society web site:

[REDACTED]

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

[REDACTED]

## Feature Review: Narnia Guides

MARTHA C. SAMMONS, *A Guide through Narnia*. Revised and expanded edition. Vancouver, BC: Regent College Publishing, 2004. ISBN 1-57383-308-8, tp, 244 pp., \$15.95.

COLIN DURIEZ, *A Field Guide to Narnia*. Foreword by Brian Sibley. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004. ISBN 0-8308-3207-6, tp, 240 pp., \$13.00.

MARK EDDY SMITH, *Aslan's Call: Finding our Way to Narnia*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005. ISBN 0-8303-3242-4, tp, 128 pp., \$10.00.

JONATHAN ROGERS, *The World According to Narnia: Christian Meaning in C.S. Lewis's Beloved Chronicles*. New York: Warner Faith, 2005. ISBN 0-446-69649-8, tp, xxii + 182 pp., \$14.99.

PETER J. SCHAKEL, *The Way into Narnia: A Reader's Guide*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2005. ISBN 0-8028-2984-8. tp, x + 202 pp., \$14.00.

Sammons' *Guide through Narnia* is appearing in its third edition; it was first published by Harold Shaw Publishers in 1979, and was reprinted as part of Sammons' survey of Lewis's major fiction in *"A Far-Off Country": A Guide to C.S. Lewis's Fantasy Fiction* (University Press of America, 2000). The first two versions have nearly the same list of contents, and spot checking suggests minor updatings and revisions only. This third version has new chapter titles, but much of the text is unchanged.

The book is a fairly good introduction to the Narnian materials—acceptable at least for the general reader. Since it is largely doing what it is supposed to do, some examples of flaws are easier to point out than the good qualities. The four signs in *SC* are confusingly stated as three (41). Telmar is called an island beyond the Western Mountains of Narnia (75). The text does not state that Telmar is an island; it may be the western part of the landmass. In the definition of "Tree of Protection," it is said to have grown "from a seed of the silver apple Digory gets for his mother" (216). No, for Aslan.

Some passages of especially good content appear. For example, Sammons compares the combination of "terrible" and "good" in a passage in Charles Williams's *Descent into Hell* with Lewis's use of the same terms in *LW&W* (137-38). She suggests an origin of the Pevensie name (and the use of "Son of Adam" and "Daughter of Eve") in Kipling's *Puck of Pook's Hill* (207). (Both of these comparisons are in the first edition; in that edition, she cited her source for the latter information.)

Certainly, this edition of Sammons' book has been re-organized in places, and passages of new material appear, as in the discussion of "Other Versions and Resources," which includes comments on editions after 1979 as well as film versions, etc. A chart of the filmed versions appears on p. 48. The first edition had an annotated "Index of Names and Places" in the *Chronicles* and "A Note on Names and Creatures." The former becomes a "Dictionary of Names and Places in the *Chronicles*" and the latter is not listed in the contents but still appears. Sammons adds a "Bibliography" of Lewis's books referred to in the text, books about the *Chronicles*, books and one essay for "Background on Lewis," other authors referred to in the text, the original editions of the *Chronicles*, other editions of the *Chronicles* (incomplete—it does not list, for example, the Puffin edition with Pauline Baynes covers), speciality books and products (including some Narnian paper dolls), and selected audio and DVD versions. A boxed list of websites appears on p. 227. As said, overall a satisfactory popular introduction.

Colin Duriez' *A Field Guide to Narnia* is one of the handbooks on Lewis he has been producing for several years now: *The C.S. Lewis Handbook* (1990) was the first, later expanded into *The C.S. Lewis Encyclopedia* (2000); related works are *The Inklings Handbook* (with David

Porter, 2001) and *Tolkien and C.S. Lewis: The Gift of Friendship* (2003), as well as a book on Tolkien solo. They are good products for the general reader, but usually without much that is new for specialists. This book is divided into three parts: "The Creation of Narnia" (six chapters, with a biographical emphasis), "All About the Chronicles of Narnia" (five chapters of additional information), and "The A-Z of Narnia" (an alphabetical listing of Narnian terms). Additionally, "A Brief Chronology" of Lewis's life, notes for the earlier chapters, and a primary and secondary bibliography. Nine photographs and one drawing accompany the first chapter.

Despite the notes (cited by page number) in the back, a number of comments have no source given: e.g., that Lewis and his brother went ice skating together while Lewis was at Cherbourg House and Warren at Malvern College (28), the origin of Duriez's chronology of Narnia (135-36), that Tolkien quoted Lewis's "The Dragon Speaks" in early drafts of "Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics" (150), Austin Farrer's comments on Lewis's fictional world (152). (I know the sources of three of these and could probably find the fourth—the point is that Duriez has not given them.) Other flaws: the need for the name Boxen is not clearly explained (23); Tolkien's "Mythopoeia" (with its first letter lowercased in a typo) is mentioned but where to find it is not explained (88); not just medieval scholars knew the world was round—any reader of Dante did, etc. (118); in a time sequence about Digory and Polly "after" should be "before" (132); Apuleius' Psyche seems to be confused with Pandora (155). A number of other points could be quibbled with, at least.

The emphasis on Spenser is appreciated (54, 56-58, 61, 97, 99, 144, 153)—although Doris T. Myers, mentioned in the text (57-58), is not in the index. (The endnote on Myers cites her essay on Lewis and Spenser, but why not also the scat-

tered discussion appearing in *C.S. Lewis in Context*, which is in the bibliography?) At any rate, the emphasis on Spenser leads to Duriez's "Lewis's approach [in the Chronicles] was eclectic," which sets up the contrast with Tolkien neatly (54). I'm not certain how Narnian fans will react to *The Faerie Queene* if they follow Duriez's hints—but Myers is surely right about the influence. (Sammons' book, above, does not mention Spenser.)

Mark Eddy Smith, the author of *Tolkien's Ordinary Virtues* (2002), in surveying the Chronicles, offers a reading that pauses on some details and skips others (he notes in the chapter on *LB*, pp. 89-90, that he has skipped discussions of the battles in the other books); that is handled in terms of his reactions, not of Narnian scholarship (his list of the Editions Used has nine books by Lewis only); and that is moralistic and/or religious in its emphasis. For example, here is a passage about Digory's having rung the bell that awoke Jadis:

Aslan is very careful to make sure that Digory recognizes the truth about that act, the truth he already knows, which is that no one else can be blamed for that action, not Uncle Andrew's manipulations nor the enchantment claimed by the writing beneath the bell. Straying from the path of virtue, even a little bit, has disastrous consequences. We all know it. I won't presume to speak for you, but for myself, that knowledge does little to curb my disobedience. (80-81)

The use of the sinner as commentator throughout the books keeps the moralism from sounding heavy handed. This is a useful rhetorical device. (I have no idea of Smith's actual moral status; that doesn't affect the rhetoric per se.)

The book (after its introduction, chapter per book, and afterword) has some "Reflection and Discussion Questions" at the back (pp. 121-27). More interesting is a short story, "Playing

Narnia,” about Suanne Ashe’s reading of the Narnian stories because her grandson asks her to (pp. 100-119). Smith says that he intended to write a story about Susan Pevensie’s new adventure in Narnia, happening when she was sixty years old; but the infringement on the Lewis Estate’s copyright stopped him. The actual story has at least one flaw in characterization—Ashe’s husband believes Aslan is real but plays golf on Sunday mornings. This is not impossible, but it is not even noted as a curiosity in his character. (The rest of the story is not subtle about characterization.)

Overall, Smith’s is a pleasant book, often with humor, discussing some details that do not usually create comment. The reflection questions at the end suggest it is intended for (at least in part) Churchly book-study groups. The religious-and-moral focus is legitimate, but here excludes the literary approach.

Jonathan Rogers, the author of “The Wilderking Trilogy” for grades 4 to 6, and a Ph.D. in seventeenth-century British literature, writes a very good introduction to the Narnian Chronicles. The subtitle of *The World According to Narnia: Christian Meaning in C.S. Lewis’s Beloved Chronicles* sounds as if this book were another of the simplistic Christian readings, but instead it is a sophisticated Christian reading.

Let me take the second chapter—“Myth Become Fact: *Prince Caspian*”—as an example. The second paragraph begins, “*Prince Caspian* is a book about mythology and belief.” Does Caspian believe the myths about ancient Narnians? Do the Narnians believe the “mythology” of the four rulers enough to blow Queen Susan’s horn? Do they believe help will come enough to send messengers and wait, despite Nikabrik’s desire to use others on their side? Do the Pevensies trust Lucy’s vision of Aslan enough to follow her instructions? The title “Myth Become Fact” is, of course, the title of a Lewis

essay (with “Became” for “Become”), and Rogers uses that material in the chapter; but, more significantly, he points to how myth—including the awakening trees—becomes true in *Prince Caspian*.

Prince Caspian has moved, one step at a time, toward the realization that the myths of Aslan and Old Narnia are living facts. He goes from fairy tales to ancient history to recent history. Even so, coming fact to face with Old Narnians—with a talking badger and two dwarfs—is much like stepping through the looking glass for Caspian. Believing in another world and actually going there are two very different things. (132)

Rogers also allows for the opposite movement: “Only after [Trumpkin] is convinced of the facts can he begin to feel the awe that radiates from the Old Stories” (49). (Lewis’s Dwarfs have a tendency to be “facts first” people.)

Of course, Rogers makes the Christian application in all chapters, but he is clearly reading Lewis in Lewis’s terms (instead of reading Lewis in rigidly Biblical terms). An introduction, a chapter per book, and a bibliography (which includes an edition of Andersen’s fairy tales and Milton’s poems and major prose). In short, a good introduction.

Peter J. Schakel has previously published, on Narnia or largely so, *Reading with the Heart: The Way into Narnia* (1979) and *Imagination and the Arts in C.S. Lewis: Journeying to Narnia and Other Worlds* (2002). He has won Mythopoeic Scholarship Awards in Inklings Studies for a book on *Till We Have Faces* and for two anthologies of essays he has co-edited, one on Lewis and one on Williams. Despite the duplication of the subtitle of the 1979 book as the main title of the new book—*The Way into Narnia: A Reader’s Guide*—they are different books.

The first section of *The Way into Narnia* offers two chapters—a biographical survey (with,

oddly for Schakel, at least one minor error) and a slightly different version of his argument for reading the Narnian books in their publication order (from the 2001 book).

The second section has nine chapters, one per book with an introduction and a conclusion. The chapters on the books are surveys of them as fairy tales; the introduction offers the Tolkienian definition, with application to Narnia as Faërie, the other, enchanted realm. (Tolkien's dislike of Narnian nymphs and fauns shows up in the conclusion's discussion, as well as Roger Lancelyn Green's dislike of Father Christmas. But Schakel defends Lewis's eclecticism and celebrates the line "Always winter but never Christmas," which he sees as a part of recovering Christmas for many readers.)

Schakel establishes themes in the various Narnian stories, hinted at in his chapter titles, such as "Believing and Seeing" in *PC* (this agrees, partly, with *PC*'s theme in Rogers' book, discussed above), "Longing and Learning" in *VDT*, "Place and Personal Identity" in *H&HB*. Two examples from the chapters will illustrate what else Schakel does. He spends much time distinguishing fairy tales from allegory (36-37, 44-45); perhaps the clearest brief statement (that illuminates some other aspects also) comes in one of the notes in the back:

Some readers interpret the White Witch as a representative of Satan. I think a good case can be made that Lewis in this book [*LW&W*] was thinking of her simply as the evil witch in a fairy tale, thus remaining within his Secondary World, not moving outside it in allegorical fashion. She is a magician with power great enough to turn living beings into stone and to create perpetual winter and like other fairy-tale witches, she is a temptress. But the fact that she is said to be dead in Chapter 17 indicates that Lewis was not equating her with the devil. (124)

Perhaps at times, briefly, a symbol of Satan, but not an allegory of him? Despite the quibble, Schakel makes a good case.

The other illustration shows something different. In his discussion of *SC*, he speaks of the "story's almost perfect symmetrical structure" (71). He cites Northrop Frye, from *The Secular Scripture*, about descending and ascending patterns: "First, the descent from a higher world [Aslan's country to Narnia]; second, the descent to a lower world [Narnia to Underland, with a vision of a still deeper world, Bism]; third, the ascent from a lower world [Underland to Narnia], and fourth, the ascent to a higher world [Narnia to Aslan's country]" (qtd. on 73). The frame at an earthly school surrounds this pattern. This seems complicated for a standard fairy tale, but it fits a romance, as indicated by Frye's subtitle: *A Study of the Structure of Romance*. Despite fairy tales and romances being kindred genres, Schakel here offers an analysis which sounds more like *Reading with the Heart* than *The Way into Narnia*.

The rest of the book may be covered quickly. After the discussion of the books, Schakel offers "The Chronicles: Annotations" (119-162), in which, tied to chapters and paragraphs, he offers what he believes an annotated edition of the Narnian books should contain. (The passage about the White Witch and Satan is one of these notes.) Then endnotes for the book, a chart for finding passages from different editions of the Narnian books, "Further Reading" (a bibliography), and an index. As one would expect, this is one of the best books to appear during the flood of Narnian materials during the lead-up to the release of the Disney-Walden Media movie based on *LW&W*.

*Reviewed by Joe R. Christopher*



# 'Caught by a Rumour'

## News and Notes

### Nebula Award Winners

The 2005 Nebula Awards® for best science fiction or fantasy were presented on May 6, 2006 by SFWA® at its annual awards banquet at the Tempe Mission Palms in Tempe, AZ.

Best Novel: *Camouflage* by Joe Haldeman

Best Novella: "Magic for Beginners" by Kelly Link

Best Novelette: "The Faery Handbag" by Kelly Link

Best Short Story: "I Live with You" by Carol Emshwiller

Best Script: *Serenity* by Joss Whedon

The first ever Andre Norton Award went to *Valiant: A Modern Tale of Faerie* by Holly Black. The Damon Knight Memorial Grand Master Award was presented to Harlan Ellison for lifetime achievement in the field, and William F. Nolan was honored as Author Emeritus.

### Tiptree Award

The James Tiptree, Jr. Literary Award Council is pleased to announce that the 2005 Tiptree Award has gone to *Air: Or, Have Not Have* by Geoff Ryman (St. Martin's/Griffin). The award ceremony was held at WisCon 30, on May 28, 2006. The James Tiptree Jr. Award is presented annually to a work that explores and expands gender roles in science fiction and fantasy. The aim of the award organizers is to seek out work that is thought-provoking, imaginative, and perhaps even infuriating.

### Paper Call

The J.R.R. Tolkien/C.S. Lewis panel of the 2006 Mid-Atlantic Popular Culture/American Culture Association Conference seeks abstracts of papers (200-250 words) that address various aspects of each author's works. The chair is open to a wide variety of topics and approaches. The

aim is to identify and characterize the recent wide acclaim given to both writers, both as serious thinkers and popular entertainers of broad and immense appeal. Deadline: 15 June 2006. Conference: Wyndham Baltimore Inner Harbor Hotel, 27-29 October 2006. Contact: [REDACTED]. Info/abstract copies: Bill Mistichelli, [REDACTED]. [REDACTED].

### Earthsea Film from Ghibli Studios

According to the Anime News Network and [REDACTED], Miyazaki Goro (son of influential Japanese animation director Miyazaki Hayao, famous for *Princess Mononoke*, *Spirited Away*, and other fantasy-themed films) is finishing work on *Gedo Senki*, a new animated feature film being billed in English as *Tales of Earthsea*. The buzz around Miyazaki's adaptation says that the director chose to adapt the third book in the cycle and include vignettes from the other novels, rather than beginning with the first story. *Gedo Senki* will be released in Japan this July; no news yet regarding U.S. distribution. More info: [REDACTED]

### Announcement

Society member Lara Sookoo reports about a group trying to raise money to help the family of notable Tolkien scholar Dr. Dan Timmons, who had ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease) and passed away last December. He wasn't able to get insurance due to his condition and his wife and young son are having a difficult time. Supporters have set up a website [REDACTED] where they hope to collect memories of Dan and condolences and prayers for his family, and there is also a donation button as to raise some money to help them.

# Mythcon 37 Announcement

August 4–7, 2006

University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK

Theme: The Map and the Territory: Maps and Landscapes in Fantasy

(with a track on Native American Fantasy/Native Americans in Fantasy)

Author Guest of Honor: Lois McMaster Bujold

Scholar Guest of Honor: Amy H. Sturgis

## The Site

The Thurman J. White Forum Building  
on the OU campus.

## Housing

The Sooner Hotel & Suites (standard hotel  
rooms and two-bedroom cottage suites).  
Breakfast, lunch, and dinner in the Commons  
Restaurant on-site.

## Events

- Book signing and reception at the University  
of Oklahoma main campus bookstore.
- Annual Banquet in the Sam Noble Oklahoma  
Museum of Natural History.

## Campus Amenities

- Special exhibit on Native American authors at  
the Western History Collections
- Special exhibit on maps in the History of  
Science Collection in Bizzell Library

Maps and brochures are available for self-guiding  
walking tours of the campus, with a focus on our  
wonderful sculptures, architecture, and gardens.

## Transportation

Fly into Will Rogers International Airport in  
Oklahoma City (about 45 minutes) or the  
nearby hub airports at Dallas/Fort Worth (a  
three-hour drive by rental car).

## Registration

\$150 Mythopoeic Society members

\$175 non-Society members

\$110 students

Single day rate: \$45 per day

(Children under 12 are free)

## Meals and Accommodations

\$53 full meal package (not including banquet)

\$50 Sunday banquet

Accommodation reservations will be made  
directly with the hotel. Standard room rate is  
\$53/night (up to 4 persons); suite is \$88/night  
(up to 6 persons).

Checks or money orders for registration and  
meals should be made payable to "Burning Hill  
Farm." You may register through the Society's  
web site, using our Paypal shopping cart feature.  
Check the Mythopoeic Society web site for  
details, updates, and links.

To receive a flyer and registration form, ask ques-  
tions, or obtain more information about the  
conference, contact:

Burning Hill Farm, Inc.  
c/o Janet Brennan Croft

e-mail



# Activity Calendar

Marion VanLoo  
Membership & Discussion Group Secretary

## Prospective Groups

### CALIFORNIA

[REDACTED] *LOTHLORIEN*

Linda Sundstrom, [REDACTED]

### CONNECTICUT

[REDACTED] *FANTASTIC WORLDS*

Bill Pierce, E-mail: [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

### FLORIDA

[REDACTED] *HOBBITON*

Paul S. Ritz, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] *ERYN GALEN*

B.L. McCauley, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] E-mail: [REDACTED]

### INDIANA

[REDACTED] *CERIN AMROTH*

Ellen Denham, E-mail: [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

## Chartered Groups

### CALIFORNIA

[REDACTED] *MYDGARD*

Lee Speth, [REDACTED]

May: *Prince Caspian* by C.S. Lewis

June: *Volsunga Saga* (William Morris translation)

[REDACTED] *KHAZAD-DÛM*

Amy Wisniewski & Edith Crowe, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

May: *Hallowed Hunt* by Lois McMaster Bujold

June: *Many Dimensions* by Charles Williams

### COLORADO

[REDACTED] *FANUIDHOL* ("CLOUDY HEAD")

Patricia Yarrow, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] E-mail: [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

### DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

[REDACTED] *KNOSSOS*

Mimi Stevens, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] E-mail: [REDACTED]

### HAWAII

[REDACTED] *SAMMATH NAUR*

Steve Brown, [REDACTED] E-mail: [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

May: *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel

June: *The Planets* by Dava Sobel (with Planetarium show following)

August: *Speed of Light* by Elizabeth Moon

### ILLINOIS

[REDACTED] *THE FAR WESTFARTHING SMIAL*

Mike Foster, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] E-mail: [REDACTED]

May: *The Silmarillion* by J.R.R. Tolkien, Ch. 9 & 10

### IOWA

[REDACTED] *ALFHEIM*

Doug Rossman, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] E-mail: [REDACTED]

### LOUISIANA

[REDACTED] *ROKE*

Sally Budd, [REDACTED]

### MICHIGAN

[REDACTED] *GALADHREMMIN-ENNORATH*

Dave & Grace Lovelace, [REDACTED]

### MINNESOTA

[REDACTED] *RIVENDELL*

David Lenander, [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

April: Meeting at Minicon

## NEVADA

[REDACTED] *CRICKHOLLOW*

Joanne Burnett, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. E-mail: [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

May: *The Historian* by Elizabeth Kostova

June: *Soldier of the Mists* by Gene Wolfe

July: *Glory Road* by Robert Heinlein

## NEW YORK

[REDACTED] *HEREN ISTARION*

(*THE NEW YORK TOLKIEN SOCIETY*)

Anthony Burdge & Jessica Burke, The New York

Tolkien Society, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. E-mail: [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

## OREGON

[REDACTED]  
Donovan Mattole, [REDACTED],

[REDACTED] E-mail: [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

May: *Arthur* by Stephen Lawhead

June: *The Four Loves* by C.S. Lewis

July: *Speaker for the Dead* by Orson Scott Card

August: *The Man Who Was Thursday* by G.K.

Chesterton

## PENNSYLVANIA

[REDACTED] *C.S. LEWIS AND FRIENDS*

Neil Gussman, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. E-mail: [REDACTED]

## SOUTH CAROLINA

[REDACTED] *THE COLUMBIA C.S. LEWIS SOCIETY*

Nina Fowler, [REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]

## WASHINGTON

[REDACTED] *MITHLOND*

Matthew Winslow, [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

## WISCONSIN

[REDACTED] *THE BURRAHOBBITS*

Jeffrey & Jan Long, [REDACTED]

### Special Interest Group

*THE ELVISH LINGUISTIC FELLOWSHIP*

Carl Hostetter, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Newsletter, *Vinyar Tengwar*. Journal, *Parma*  
*Eldalamberon*. Christopher Gilson, [REDACTED]

### Correspondence Groups

*BUTTERBUR'S WOODSHED (general fantasy)*

Diane Joy Baker, [REDACTED]

Correspondence circular with set topic. Web: [REDACTED]

May: 2006 MFA Adult nominees

July: Mazes and Gardens of Fantasy

*ONCE UPON A TIME (children's fantasy)*

Laura Krentz, [REDACTED]

Correspondence circular. Web: [REDACTED]

### Online Discussion Groups

*MYTHSOC E-LIST*

Society activities and general book-related discussion.

Sign up: [REDACTED] or contact

Joan Marie Verba: [REDACTED]

*COINHERENCE*

Online discussion of Charles Williams

David Davis: E-mail: [REDACTED]



## More Book Reviews

DAVID SANDNER, ED., *Fantastic Literature: A Critical Reader*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004. ISBN 0-275-98053-7, hc, 357 pp., \$59.95.

About twenty years ago, a paperback volume called *Fantasists on Fantasy* (ed. Robert Boyer and Kenneth Zahorski) reprinted essays by a number of fantasy writers reflecting on their art. Intended as a textbook, it is the only forerunner to the present volume, a large hardcover also reprinting essays on fantasy, but which is otherwise very different.

Four of the essays—by Macdonald, Chesterton, Lovecraft, and Le Guin—also appeared in the earlier book, but few of the other contributors are fiction writers, or literary historians. Most are theoretical critics. Sandner is less interested in fantasy literature in the narrow sense, or in its history, than the mode of the fantastic, and its analysis. Instead of offering personal subjective views, most of the essays are concerned with hard definitional analysis. Sandner's method is to set the critics exploring different ways the fantastic may be used, and to set them against each other in critical dialectic. (Appropriately enough, two essays are avowedly Marxist.) There are no soft appreciations of individual authors here: many of the essays are austere theoretical, and most cite other critics more often than novels.

The book begins with brief nuggets of thought, often wrenched confusingly out of context, by seminal writers from Plato to Coleridge, and continues in chronological order. One of the last essays in the book is the editor's own commentary on the essay by Joseph Addison which is one of the first in the book. Italo Calvino's response to Tzvetan Todorov appears immediately before the essay to which it replies. Many of the essays summarize essays that are earlier in the book, and thus could have been trimmed; references to other essays that aren't in this book do

not say enough. The topics swing off in various directions. Freud's famous but turgid essay on "The Uncanny" is included so that Sandner may show the difference between horror and fantasy. Several critics' ideas of "the fantastic" seems to lean towards magical realism and essentially exclude anything a reader of *Mythprint* would call fantasy. It isn't until Brian Attebery's contribution towards the end that somebody finally puts the pieces together and explains the relationship between all these different approaches.

Attebery is perhaps the clearest writer of the critics here; other good ones include Northrop Frye on the nature of romance (tangential though this may be to fantasy) and Colin Manlove keenly defining fantasy. Others are not so clear. Mikhail Bakhtin and Fredric Jameson are famous critics who achieve near-unreadable hermeneutics. Other essays seem useless, at least in this context. Eric Rabkin tries to derive a whole theory of fantasy from a tiny squib by Borges, and fails pointlessly. John Clute's definition of fantasy demands its original context, the gigantic cross-reference structure of *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy*, to make any real sense. Harold Bloom writes an egoistic puff piece about his own deservedly-forgotten fantasy novel. A single paragraph by Damon Knight wrenched out of an essay on science fiction fails to illuminate the difference between SF and fantasy: surely Sandner could have found something better by this lucid critic. The 18th and 19th century authors, most of them rather turgid critics until one reaches Chesterton, circle frustratingly around the subject through no fault of their own, for it had not yet been defined. Sandner tries to explain his selections in the headnotes, but is not always helpful.

Above all, one becomes aware halfway through the book of a hole the size of a 500-pound gorilla, J.R.R. Tolkien's "On Fairy-

Stories.” Not only is there no excerpt from Tolkien’s vital essay, hardly any of the later essays refer to it, and few enough even say much about Tolkien as a fantasist: Le Guin, Manlove, and Attebery being among the honorable exceptions, and I don’t believe it’s a coincidence that the most relevant essayists are also among the best writers in the book. With the exception of Le Guin, and to some extent Manlove, Clute, and Gary Wolfe, there’s little addressing the theory of the fantasy genre as we know it. Other good essays on the field—by Boyer and Zahorski themselves, among others—would have improved coverage here tremendously.

Cross-checking with original publications reveals that bibliographical references are sometimes omitted; Sandner’s transcription has misspelled some names that were correct in the original (and the misspellings are faithfully reproduced in the index); Le Guin’s 1989 annotations to her 1973 essay are omitted, although the 1989 revision is cited in the headnotes.

This book is convenient for reference to check quotes, and some of the essays are good reading if you don’t have the books they come from. But as a compilation, this is an inward-gazing critical book about criticism, and far from the definitive documentary history of the fantastic that was evidently intended. Only about half the essays are both intended for a general reader and comprehensible outside of original context, and only a devout critical theorist, a masochist, or a book reviewer would attempt to read this volume all the way through.

*Reviewed by David Bratman*



DONALD T. WILLIAMS, *Mere Humanity: G.K. Chesterton, C.S. Lewis, and J.R.R. Tolkien on the Human Condition*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2006. ISBN 0-8054-4018-6, tp, 212 pp., \$14.99.

Some years ago in my surgical intensive care nursing days, a surgeon came bustling into our ICU to check on his patient. Normally, the nurse caring for the patient would go into the patient’s room with the physician, bringing him or her up to date on everything that had happened to the patient since the last visit. As I was about to do this, the surgeon waved me away with, “I’m just here to see his toe. I only care about the toe. Don’t tell me about anything else.” Ever since, that experience has represented in my mind the extreme specialization and also extreme reductionism which plagues our contemporary world. Fitzhugh Mullan, in his 2002 *Big Doctoring in America: Profiles in Primary Care*, writes that “[specialization] is not wrong in its assessment of science or the challenges facing clinical medicine. Rather, it is wrong in its assumptions about the human being. Despite the magnificent march of science, the human being remains a complex animal whose body and mind, self and family, person and community, are linked in ways that will resist the effort to compartmentalize every pain and blemish as the domain of an expert but narrow specialist.”

Williams’ new book, *Mere Humanity*, is about contemporary assumptions about the human being which, like the expert but narrow toe surgeon, are often wrong. Because, as the toe surgeon failed to realize practically, the toe is connected to the foot bone and the foot bone connected to the leg bone—go ahead, sing the rest! It will do you good. And mysteriously connected to all those bones is something else altogether: the transcendent human mind.

It may take experiences like these to appreciate fully Williams’ major argument which is the case against reducing the human being to something physical; there are also related psychological and social reductionist tendencies lurking about which want to turn each of us into a product of our parenting or social group or disadvantaged

childhood. I suppose that even psychological and social reductionism would ultimately become physical unless there was an explicit stance to the contrary. In any case, reducing a person to any part of that person is still reducing the person—we are a composite whole, much more than the sum of any of our parts. Even more significantly, we bridge the material and the spiritual worlds and herein lies our uniqueness.

Williams does an admirable job compiling and presenting arguments from Chesterton, Lewis, and Tolkien about the irreducibility of the human person to something merely material. In this day of brain research, we need to keep in mind more than ever that just because something flickers on a screen when the person experiences X does not mean everything coming from that person can be explained in terms of brain flickers. Each of us learns to transcend our material selves experientially as well as ontologically perhaps only in so far as we are increasingly committed to the human person as, not less than our biology, but more than our biology.

*Mere Humanity* is a meaty book of six chapters, an introduction, a conclusion, and two chapter length appendices. Chesterton, Lewis, and Tolkien get a chapter each in a compilation and explication of what in their writing contributes to the argument for human irreducibility and transcendence. These are systematically done as only a competent scholar can do it. Chesterton's argument is from art, Lewis's argument is from Natural Law (aka the Tao), and Tolkien's argument is essentially the Chestertonian art argument taken further and developed into an argument from our story telling propensities. The three chapters which follow these look in depth at how these arguments are illustrated and explicated in Lewis's space trilogy, the Chronicles of Narnia, and Tolkien's Middle-earth stories.

Some of my favorite passages are in chapter

six. For example, Williams explains in a way I find both poignant and encouraging how human mortality in Tolkien's fiction is both limitation and freedom, the gift from Iluvatar and the doom of men. I really loved this on pages 121 and 122:

"We shape our ends beyond the music of the Ainur which is fate to all things else; it is one with this gift of freedom that we live short lives and depart. So in Tolkien's world human mortality becomes a symbol for human irreducibility, for the special relationship that being the children of Iluvatar with the gift (or doom) of men gives us to the world. It is the paradoxical limitation that makes freedom possible for good and for ill."

In other words, the choices we make here and now in some strange way impact the things we are to become, good or bad, outside of this material world. It is transcendence showing up in our actions.

The appendices I found very interesting as well. Appendix A develops an apology for art generally and literature specifically as constituencies of a healthy cultural life and a healthy church life. Appendix B is a diagnostic chapter which pinpoints the logical conclusion of reductionism: there is no such thing as objective truth. Williams is known in some circles as an implacable PostModern Basher and here he cleaves PostModern heads with as much energy as Gimli on the walls of Helm's Deep. While I sympathize with the diagnosis, I am not sure that verbal axes are the best treatment. As Williams himself acknowledges, dialogue is not really possible between those whose epistemological premises are mutually exclusive. There must be other ways. I'm not sure what the other ways are. Whatever way one chooses, Williams' thoughtful analysis of reductionism and its effects have the weight, the edge, and the potential efficacy of Gimli's axe.

*Reviewed by Ruby Dunlap*

## Short Reviews

ALAN MOORE (WRITER), KEVIN O'NEILL (ARTIST), *ET AL.*, *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen, Volume II*. La Jolla, CA: America's Best Comics, 2003. (Originally published six separate issues, 2002-03.) ISBN 1-4012-0118-0, softcover, no page numbers, \$14.95.

Volume 1 of this series (with its identical title) is well known, both as its success as a graphic novel and as its less successful adaptation (in part) as a movie. What is of particular interest to students of Lewis is the opening twenty pages of this second volume, a prologue set on Mars. Most of it is taken up with a meeting of Gullivar Jones (of Edwin Lester Arnold's *Lt. Gullivar Jones—His Vacation*) and John Carter (of Edgar Rice Burrough's *A Princess of Mars et al.*). They are preparing to wage war against what is here hypothesized as an invading group of aliens (called "Molluscs"—these turn out to be H.G. Wells' Martians of *The War of the Worlds*). The battle turns against Jones, Carter, and their followers until sorns show up to fight on their side against the aliens. (The plural seroni is not used.) O'Neill's drawings of sorns are very simplified—there is no suggestion of their feathers, none of their seven fingers on each hand, none of their feet (in the drawings they walk on spikes). Their faces are also simplified in the drawings. No characterization is offered. One sorn is found in the enemy camp in a cage that the Molluscs have used "flesh-mechanics" on, giving it wings—no indication is offered on the functionability of the wings. Altogether, the presentation of the sorns is disappointing to anyone who has read *Out of the Silent Planet*.

*Reviewed by Joe R. Christopher*



HIAWYN ORAM, *The Giant Surprise: A Narnia Story*. Illustrated by Tudor Humphries. New York:

HarperCollinsPublishers, 2005. ISBN 0-06-008361-1, hc, 32 pp., \$15.99.

The Lewis Estate created a furor a few years ago when it announced that it would be publishing further Narnian books. Then it grew quiet, and this book—produced in time to catch the movie excitement—appears. Hiawyn Oram, born and raised in South Africa, graduate of the University of Natal, is a London writer for film and television and of children's books. The illustrator lives in Devon.

The book is aimed at ages 3 to 7; it has full color illustrations, typography involving large print for the giants in the tale and other such devices, and a simple, moral but non-religious story (Aslan is not mentioned). The illustrations are pleasant, although Puddleglum the Marshwiggle has a longer and uglier face than Baynes gave him (more like Lewis described him).

The opening is this: Puddleglum and his niece Lally are in the marsh—he is fishing and she is playing with a toy boat when two marsh mice show up, warning that giants have come to the marsh.

"There's a terrible roaring going on!" said Greep.

"And sloshing and galoshing," added Graypaw from behind.

The two giants show up, catch the mice, and go off. Puddleglum and Lally follow, to rescue the mice, who are in danger (with a number of other mice) of being made into a mouse pie.

Presumably the contrast in size between the giants and the mice is meant to be an unstated bit of humor. The book does not make the Narnian distinction between Talking Animals and other animals—all the mice shown have scarves around their necks and seem to be Talking Animals. A crane, which shows up in



most pictures and which helps Puddleglum in his rescue of the mice from the giants' castle, is not mentioned in the text and thus does not speak—but its actions imply rationality.

The pictures of Lally give her a Marshwillow body and webbed fingers, but her face is a typical human face—presumably for audience identification. That she has to divert the giants (they are Lewis's stone-throwers in character) makes her a heroine in the story. Puddleglum gets only two really gloomy comments in the text (after the mice are saved), where the reader does not get the distinction between saying gloomy things and acting otherwise.

The other oddity in the story is that the two giants—Dribble and Crackerwhack—show up at the first with fishing rods—and they hook the two marsh mice. (The picture shows them hooked by their cloth belts.) The fishing motif is dropped after that—but fishing lines with hooks seem a very odd way to catch mice. Overall, an innocuous bit of Narnian pseudopigraphia.

*Reviewed by Joe R. Christopher*



J.T. PETTY, *Clemency Pogue: Fairy Killer*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2005. ISBN 0689872364, hc, 120 pp., \$9.95.

A strange book, but a delightful one, only 120 pages long and one of the few books I've read where I really, really want the author to write more books right away.... The author has a remarkable turn of phrase, and it is used to great effect in a wonderful little story about a girl who has not only heard or read all the great fairy tales, but who is forced to put them to practical use.

One day, Clemency is attacked by a vicious little fairy. Unlike other fairies with helpful or friendly jobs, like the Tooth Fairy, this is one of the bad ones, the Fairy of Frequent and Painful

Pointless Antagonism. To make matters worse, the fairy has actually put Clemency's life in danger, and pushed, literally, to the brink, Clemency does the only thing she can think of: she shouts out that she doesn't believe in fairies, repeatedly, until the evil fairy drops dead.

The next thing she knows, she's being berated by a hobgoblin who is upset with her for randomly killing several *other* fairies with her poorly chosen words, and Clemency sets off on a quest to set things right. For instance, Clemency has also killed the Fairy of Random Prodding, which was stirring up a herd of cattle in Texas. When that fairy died, in the words of the author, "the cows were so happy, they danced a jig. Passersby were convinced that it was a miracle, and in many respects it was, for nobody had ever taught those cows anything but samba." While that fairy wasn't really much of a loss, she was still part of the order of things, and some of the other casualties were far more serious....

By the end of her quest, most of the important problems have been fixed, a few minor ones politely ignored, and Clemency has a wonderful story to tell the family at dinner.

This is J.T. Petty's first novel. He has written films and video games, and now I'm going to have to track those down, as this little story is quite good.

*Reviewed by Nick Smith*



CHERIE PRIEST, *Four and Twenty Blackbirds*. New York: Tom Doherty Associates, 2005. ISBN 0765313081, tp, 285 pp., \$13.95.

Here's Southern Gothic with its traditional pleasures but largely without clichés. The orphan child who sees ghosts is here, but she's a smart-mouth little girl who grows up into a highly independent young woman. Eden is established



early as a girl with attitude, which makes it rather more believable than usual when she takes some crazy risks; the traditional gothic fiction heroine would have run screaming from her murderous cousin, or simply fainted. Not our Eden: she goes after the guy. The evil matriarch Tatie is overtly racist and would be perfectly happy if mixed-race Eden got pruned from the convoluted family tree. The requisite demented cousin has tried that more than once, with Tatie's connivance in avoiding prison for either attempt. He's not just a stock menace, though. Priest gives us tantalizing bits of background until he becomes a real (though still very dangerous) person. I won't attempt to list all the major characters living and dead; there are limits to how long a review should be. Besides, it's more fun to encounter them as you go along.

Yes, Eden goes up alone to the lonely house on the hill—a deserted asylum, in this case. She has her reasons. She has questions no one will answer, not even the loving aunt and aunt's husband who raised her, and indeed she finds partial answers at Pine Breeze. She also encounters a spirit far more malevolent than the sad ghosts she's seen so far. Those ghosts have set us up for seeing otherworldly visitors as gentle souls, so the ones Eden encounters at Pine Breeze come as a shock to her and to us in spite of all the scary stories we've heard or seen.

When the supernatural is woven into ordinary life as carefully and clearly as this I can believe any number of impossible things before breakfast. No incident is without purpose in the plot. The fellow camper who drops out of Eden's early life unremarked is accounted for later. Nothing just appears out of nowhere. There's a phenomenal amount of background information to impart concerning family history, local history, and legends about both. I only rarely felt that I was getting an info dump.

I've never lived in the South, so I can't say whether her fictional Southern world is close to reality (minus ghosts, I suppose, or maybe not) but it's interesting and consistent. It's got the right humid, mysterious atmosphere. Ghosts seem more believable in mists and swamps than out in the scorching sunlight we get here in Colorado. Spanish moss always looks as if it might be hiding almost anything, and Eden's journey through St. Augustine, Florida mingles ordinary reality and visions beautifully.

The end seemed a bit abrupt. I'm glad to see that there are to be sequels.

*Reviewed by Jane Bigelow*



ZILPHA KEATLY SNYDER, *The Magic Nation Thing*. New York: Delacorte Press, 2005. ISBN 0385730853, hc, 176 pp., \$15.95

This blend of mystery and fantasy is an interesting take on several genres. Abby, an intelligent and athletic 12-year-old, is also gifted with a family trait ... psychic powers. When she holds an item, she can see things about the item's owner ... at least, sometimes. Unfortunately, she doesn't want this family heritage, and thinks that her mother's fascination with it contributed to the breakup of the marriage of her parents. Her mother had insisted on becoming a private detective, and the father's job had moved to another town, among other differences.

As a young child, Abby had known that she could use these abilities, but because of a misunderstanding, had assumed they were perfectly normal. It wasn't until she realized that her peers could not do the same things that it began to bother her.

Even though the story involves solving a couple of crimes, it is more about Abby learning

things than about detective work, and it appears to be the start of a series. If so, I look forward to the next book.

*Reviewed by Nick Smith*



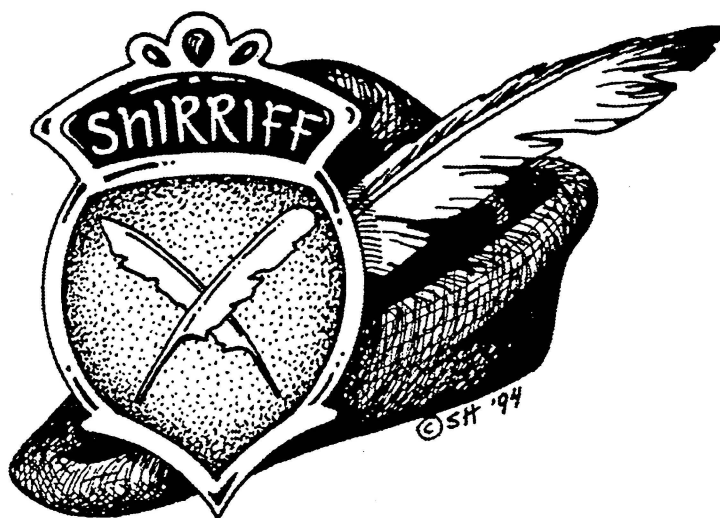
CARRIE VAUGHN, *Kitty Goes to Washington*. New York: Warner Books, 2006. ISBN 0-446-61642-7, pb, 360 pp., \$6.99.

Werewolf radio personality Kitty Norville returns in this sequel to *Kitty and the Midnight Hour*. She is still hosting her midnight radio show, the appropriately named "The Midnight Hour," but she is now traveling around the country, doing her weekly show at whichever affiliate station she is near. As her show discusses matters supernatural, generally werewolves and vampires, it is hardly surprising when she is subpoenaed by the U.S. Senate as an expert witness on hearings concerning a paranormal research center. After all, how many admitted werewolves are there?

So our girl hightails it to our nation's capital to comply. While there, she falls for a sexy were-jaguar from Brazil who introduces her to the furry were-occupants of the city who live in a peaceful alternative to the stressful pack structure which was all Kitty had known before. Kitty also meets the head vampire of the city and learns the truth of Elijah Smith, the elusive cult figure whom we met in the first book.

Vaughn writes a ripping tale, fast-paced and sexy, sprinkled with humor. Kitty is a very likable and believable character, all the more human because of her paranormality. The things that happen to her are fantastic, as in based in fantasy, but her reactions are those of any person trying to do the right thing while pursuing a career and looking for happiness. These books will never win the Pulitzer prize, but they're lots of fun to read.

*Reviewed by Berni Phillips*



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