

MYTHPRINT

The Monthly Bulletin of the Mythopoeic Society

Vol. 43 No. 9

September 2006

Whole No. 294



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

Book Reviews: Fiction

TRUDI CANAVAN, *The Black Magician Trilogy*, consisting of *The Magicians' Guild* (2001, ISBN 0-06-057528-X), *The Novice* (2002, ISBN 0-06-057529-8) and *The High Lord* (2003, ISBN 0-06-057530-1). New York: Eos/HarperCollins.

How many of you can remember the first time you cracked the covers of a classic multi-book fantasy series? The first time you looked into Hickman's *Dragonlance*, maybe? Or, of course, Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*? How about Donaldson's *White Gold? Forgotten Realms*? And on we go ... there have been tons of these published. But there are always those that stand out, the ones I mentioned just now by name. I'd like to add to that list now, with Trudi Canavan's *Black Magician Trilogy*.

Set and centered mostly in the city of Imardin (which reminds me of Sanctuary in the *Thieves' World* universe), this three book tale follows the life of a young girl named Sonea. In Canavan's fantasy realm, magic is something only certain people have—which isn't an unusual concept—but when potential magicians are discovered they need to have the power released and centered by an already trained magician. To do this, the country of Kyralia has created the Magicians' Guild: a place of training for potential magicians to discover and utilize their powers in protection and service of the kingdom.

Non-guild magicians (rogues) are not tolerated, and any magician who wishes to leave the guild whether by choice or nay has their powers bound so they can't tap into them—much like shutting off an emotional power source. Even wearing the marked robes of a magician when one is not is a crime. All magicians of Kyralia—and other allied lands—are found, taught and made members of the Magicians' Guild. Organized into a rigid hierarchal structure, the guild advises and takes orders from the king and governs itself from within.

Occasionally a person's magical ability will arise naturally due to its sheer strength and power. Unfortunately, that very power will manifest itself randomly without proper training and centering by the guild, and an untrained magician has the potential to cause cataclysmically destructive results as the power overwhelms them—and takes out a good portion of the area around them as well.

Sonea is such a magician. Throughout the first book in the trilogy, *The Magicians' Guild*, the storyline follows Sonea's discovery of her powers one day during the traditional yearly Purge of the Imardin city where the power of the magicians is used to push out the derelicts and unwanted from the inner walls of the pristine city into the slums that surround them. The Purge is, as expected, looked on as a terrible thing every year and always draws crowds of people to protest both loudly and violently. Dragged into the fray, Sonea finds herself one of these protesters and in a freak incident hurls a stone at the lined magicians—to find that it has penetrated their magical shield and solidly slapped one about the head.

The result is a search of the city and the slums for this rogue magician. While Sonea and her friends feel the guild will of course kill her for being a magician outside the guild—who typically choose their potential students only from the well-to-do of Kyralia and not slum dwellers like her—the guild is actually trying to find her before she self destructs and takes half of the city with her. After being found, Sonea finds herself struggling with the fact that within the guild—which she has hated all her life—are really good people with good morals. Despite some antagonism from one of the other mages, Sonea eventually joins the guild ... which is good because if not that then we wouldn't have ...

Book Two of the series, *The Novice*, which fol-

lows Sonea's learning within the confines of the guild. Her struggles are doubled by nagging brats of "higher" social order who, regardless of Sonea's obvious strength of power, heckle her at every opportunity. The book spends much of its time describing the childish pranks and ambushes Sonea must face in school due to her social status, and this allows the author to begin rolling out subtle plotlines that continue to build quietly in the background as *The Novice* takes on a more whimsical tack overall.

The High Lord is a riveting finish to the storyline. Akarrin, High Lord of the Magicians' Guild of Kyralia, is found to be a practitioner of Black Magic—the ability to siphon power off of other people to increase your own whether to fight or protect. While the power does provide many good possibilities for moralistic use, it also provides the ability to become so powerful that an entire guild of magicians cannot stop you—and hence many centuries before was banned from use and never taught again in the guild. However, unallied lands have continued to use the power of black magic and, therefore, have become very strong. A handful of their rogue magicians could easily overrule the Kyralian's sheer numbers.

For this reason Akkarrin practiced black magic after learning it as a slave on a quest as a young member of the Kyralian guild. Practicing in secret while being occasionally pursued by assassins with the same power from the land he fled, he reluctantly enlists Sonea as a willing apprentice of the arts. The final confrontation finds Sonea and Akkarin banished from the guild and hiding in the city's outlying slums as a handful of rogue magicians from the Sachakan lands terrorize and beat down the guild itself. The battles are ferocious yet heroic, with the duo using tricks and traps to take out the Sachakan invaders one by one.

Canavan's series is phenomenally good and I

recommend *The Black Magician* trilogy to anybody. Her characters are wonderfully developed, the Kyralian milieu is intrinsically detailed and realistic and the plotlines are suspenseful and fulfilling. Sonea is as good a protagonist as Frodo Baggins and the supporting folks are just as interesting. Much time is spent as they muddle over different thoughts in their heads giving the reader more insight into the world of Kyralia while simultaneously defining the people with fervor and realism. Pick it up yourself for a jaunt through a fantasy realm that, twenty years from now, might be as much a classic world as Middle-earth has become.

Reviewed by Marcus Pan



BETTY LEVIN, *Thorn*. Asheville, NC: Front Street Press, 2005. \$16.95. ISBN 1932425462, hc, 176 pp., \$16.95.

On an unnamed island in an unnamed setting, a small group of people try desperately to survive. They are at a stone-age level of technology, and two generations earlier, a tsunami killed the bulk of the population and ruined the island's natural resources. So, they try to get by with too few people, too few resources, and too little information passed down from their ancestors. The gene pool is too small, and as a result birth defects and stillbirths are a problem. The people depend upon fishing and hunting seals and dolphins, but they don't even have the resources to build more than a handful of fishing boats. So, slowly they are dying out.

Into this situation comes a sailing boat from another island. A man is on board, claiming to be the child of people who came from the dying island, and he brings his own child to live there, as the place where he lives has driven the child out for being crippled.

The result is a story of survival on a personal and societal level, as the people of the island depend upon omens to decide whether to keep or kill the young boy, who has skills and talents that could help them, but who also has a “dead” leg that so frightens everyone.

If Betty Levin had named the location, putting it on an island in the Pacific, I think that no one would have labeled it fantasy. By not naming the island or the time period, she left it up to the reader to imagine the location, which is fine, but that still doesn’t make it fantasy. It is an interesting “prehistorical” novel, if that’s a suitable term. The story is told from the viewpoint of Thorn, and that of Willow, one of the very few girls. Willow is learning the few stories that survived, from the old woman of the island, and is being prepared to have as many children as possible, in the hopes that some of them will be healthy and strong. For some reason, she doesn’t care for that part of her responsibilities

The ending is a little ambiguous, but thought-provoking in many ways. I will have no trouble recommending this to thoughtful readers, but it is not an action/adventure story.

Reviewed by Nick Smith



O.R. MELLING, *The Hunter’s Moon*. (Chronicles of Faerie #1) New York: Amulet Books, 2005. ISBN 0-8109-5857-0, hc, 274 pp., \$16.95.

This is not precisely a new fantasy series, just new to American readers. According to *School Library Journal* (which recommends it for readers Grade 8 and above) it was originally published in Ireland in 1992 and in Canada the following year. The author (whose real name is Geraldine Valerie Whelan) is a well-known author in Canada, and a number of her books—

including this one—have won Canadian book awards. Her entry in *Contemporary Authors* reveals both an excellent background for writing a book on faerie set in Ireland—B.A. in Philosophy/Celtic Studies; M.A. in medieval history—and an appreciation of C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien.

The Hunter’s Moon follows the adventures of Irish sixteen-year-old Findabhair and her visiting Canadian cousin Gwen. Both are romantics with a consuming interest in Irish mythology and fantasy. Findabhair has a *Lord of the Rings* poster in her room—the film, not the book—and has progressed from swooning over Legolas to appreciating the more mature charms of Aragorn. In her words, “I can’t believe I’m in love with a man over forty.” Woven in with what sounds like acceptable teenage-girl banter, these cousins have a serious intention to travel Ireland seeking the true magic of that land. Led by forces Findabhair doesn’t remember and Gwen doesn’t yet recognize, they taste that magic on the hill of Tara and vow to spend the night. Findabhair is abducted by the King of the Fairies, and Gwen is left alone in a foreign country. Quickly determining that anyone she went to for help would think her out of her mind, Gwen vows to find her cousin herself and rescue her somehow.

What follows is an intriguing travelogue of the highways and byways (mostly the latter) of modern Ireland, mixed in with fairy lore both folksy and academic. As one of Gwen’s helpers along the way tells her, “There are rules ... that govern the mingling of the fairy folk with our kind.” Figuring out those rules as she goes along, and collecting a motley but appealing group of helpers along the way, she eventually finds Findabhair, only to discover her cousin doesn’t feel in need of rescue. Things get complicated—this is Faerie, after all, and little is what it seems. A great deal of heavy-duty magic eventually ensues, with a climactic battle of a small fellow-

ship against a major, seemingly unbeatable adversary. There is something more than a little Tolkienian about that fellowship, with its combination of the ordinary and not-so-ordinary. Although the ending is not without loss, it should be a satisfying one to readers.

At first reading this book seemed unsatisfying. It seemed somewhat superficial, with events moving at such a breakneck pace that the reader had no opportunity to linger and reflect. (It may be worth noting that the author, under her real name, is also a scriptwriter.) It has the feel of something clearly written on purpose for an adolescent audience—which, of course, it was—but it suffers in comparison with my personal touchstone for YA novels, *A Wizard of Earthsea*. That's probably an unfair comparison on my part, since most fantasy written for adults suffers at least as much. Perhaps the fast pace requires too much telling and not enough showing the reader; not enough opportunity for slower, deeper discovery of meaning. That said, I think what to me are deficiencies might recommend it to the average fantasy-philic reader of YA novels. Although my co-reviewer is hardly average, she's many decades closer to the book's target audience, so I'll be very interested in seeing what she has to say.

It did improve on a second reading, so I come down on the side of recommending it. It was well reviewed by such standard sources as *Booklist* and *School Library Journal*. *Chronicles of Faerie #2, The Summer King*, was published in 2006. I haven't read it, but the brief description I've seen suggests it isn't really a sequel, but another book set in the same "universe" with different protagonists.

Reviewed by Edith L. Crowe

And a second opinion ...

Ask the average person what their impression is of fairies. Chances are, you'll receive a detailed

explanation of small, winged creatures, the tooth fairy, and the odd story about little people who fix shoes. When I read *The Hunter's Moon*, however, I was given a completely different perception. Granted, I've read about fairies since I was young and have long outgrown this stereotypical view, but I still found myself interested by the new perspective that Melling brought to the book.

Melling accents the cunning side of the Fair Folk perfectly: they are always willing to help out—but beware. There's the occasional leprechaun who'll give you a lift to Tara, who might also ram into your bus with his to stop you going anywhere else. Melling doesn't try to hide their trickiness or downplay the fairies' appeal, which is best exemplified in her portrayal of the fairy king as both a deceptive and a dashing character.

The story was also very entrancing, making the reader need to have the book within reach at all times. As soon as I thought I had the plot pinned down, it metamorphosed into something completely different. The antagonist becomes an ally, the Faerie world is not all it seems, and the entire plot wraps up neatly at the end. After her Irish cousin Findabhair is abducted by fairies, Gwen chases after the fairy court, preparing to face off against the Faerie King Finvarra. But things are never as they seem in Faerie, least of all for Gwen.

Towards the ending, I found it near impossible to put down the book for long without wondering what would happen next. The descriptions were excellent and the climax captivated me all the way to the end of the book, and after. Not everything is resolved, but it sets the stage nicely for a sequel. I highly recommend this book. No matter how much you know (or don't know) about fairies, *The Hunter's Moon* will be a welcome and refreshing read.

Reviewed by Alex Yuschik



DELIA SHERMAN, *Changeling*. New York: Viking (Penguin Group), 2006. ISBN 0-670-05967-6, hc, 292 pp., \$16.99.

For those of us who think of New York City as a fabulous land of faerie, Delia Sherman has presented proof of that in her new YA novel, *Changeling*. Neef is a changeling, a mortal child stolen and brought to faerie with a fairy child left in her place so her human parents will be unsuspecting. Neef has been raised in New York Between in the Green Lady's territory, Central Park, by her fairy godmother, a white rat. Despite living among the fantastic, Neef is as bored as any 12-year-old in suburbia and longs for adventure. This, unfortunately, makes her easy prey for those wishing a little fun at her expense. Tricked by a member of the Wild Hunt into breaking a geas she was unaware of, she is removed from the protection of the Green Lady and must run to escape the Wild Hunt.

Neef certainly has adventures then. While imprisoned by a *tengu*, a Japanese mountain spirit, she meets her fairy counterpart, who fully believes she is a mundane human being named Jennifer Goldhirsch. This freaks Neef out, as one thing she has learned in her short life is the necessity of never revealing your true name as it gives one power over you. And the fairy's name is Neef's true name, so Neef has to give her other self a use name. Neef decides to call her Changeling, so the book title is a reference to both girls.

Neef still needs to get the Wild Hunt off her back so she undertakes a quest, retrieving three magical objects. This quest takes her to other parts of New York Between, where she encounters mermaids and vampires, chorus lines and Wall Street brokers.

In her acknowledgements, Sherman thanks

Ellen Kushner, and I'd like to thank her, too. She said Kushner was responsible for naming the "Eloise Award for Naughty Children," a concept which tickled my fancy immensely while reading this, and she also liked Honey, a vampire child Neef and Changeling meet. Sherman says that Kushner "liked Honey when no one else quite understood why she was there (including me)." Oh, I think I understand why she's there. Honey is a reflection of Neef: a young girl torn from her former life who can never go home again. Honey was killed by a vampire and raised to be one herself, never growing up, never going back to her old life. Neef was stolen from the mortal world and replaced by a fairy child. Changeling has become more mortal than Neef could ever be, so Neef could not reclaim her life if she wanted to. Neef doesn't fit in any place except faerie. So it's no wonder that Honey and Neef bond.

Changeling is a charming book which should appeal to pre-teens and teens alike (not to mention us older folks). Neef is saucy and rebellious as many of us were at that age, and she learns that such behavior is not always appropriate—but sometimes it is.

Reviewed by Berni Phillips Bratman



Activity Calendar

Marion VanLoo
Membership & Discussion Group Secretary

Prospective Groups

CALIFORNIA

██████████ *LOTHLORIEN*

Linda Sundstrom, ██████████

FLORIDA

██████████ *HOBBITON*

Paul S. Ritz, ██████████

██████████ *ERYN GALEN*

B.L. McCauley, ██████████

E-mail: ██████████

INDIANA

██████████ *CERIN AMROTH*

Ellen Denham, E-mail: ██████████

Web: ██████████

Chartered Groups

CALIFORNIA

██████████: *MYDGARD*

Lee Speth, ██████████

September: *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* by J.K. Rowling

October: *Clemency Pogue, Fairy Killer* by J.T. Petty

██████████ *KHAZAD-DÛM*

Amy Wisniewski & Edith Crowe, ██████████

E-mail: ██████████

Web: ██████████

September: *The Penelopiad* by Margaret Atwood

October: *Hallowed Hunt* by Lois McMaster Bujold

November: *The Strange Adventures of Rangergirl* by Tim Pratt

December: Annual Reading & Eating Meeting

COLORADO

██████████ *FANUIDHOL ("CLOUDY HEAD")*

Patricia Yarrow, ██████████

E-mail: ██████████

Web: ██████████

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

██████████ *KNOSSOS*

Mimi Stevens, ██████████

E-mail: ██████████

September: *The Place of the Lion* by Charles Williams

October: *Rough Magicke* by John Houghton

HAWAII

██████████ *SAMMATH NAUR*

Steve Brown, ██████████ E-

mail: ██████████

Web: ██████████

September: *Magic for Beginners* by Kelly Link

October: *The Historian* by Elizabeth Kostova

Nov: *The Time Traveler's Wife* by Audrey Neffenegger

ILLINOIS

██████████ *THE FAR WESTFARTHING SMLAL*

Mike Foster, ██████████

E-mail: ██████████

IOWA

██████████ *ALFHEIM*

Doug Rossman, ██████████

E-mail: ██████████

LOUISIANA

██████████ *ROKE*

Sally Budd, ██████████

MICHIGAN

██████████ *GALADHREMMIN-ENNORATH*

Dave & Grace Lovelace, ██████████

MINNESOTA

██████████ *RIVENDELL*

David Lenander, ██████████

Web: ██████████

NEVADA

██████████ *CRICKHOLLOW*

Joanne Burnett, ██████████

E-mail: ██████████

Web: ██████████

July: *Glory Road* by Robert Heinlein

NEW YORK

██████████ *HEREN ISTARION*

(*THE NEW YORK TOLKIEN SOCIETY*)

Anthony Burdge & Jessica Burke, The New York
Tolkien Society, ██████████

E-mail: ██████████

Web: ██████████

OREGON

Donovan Mattole, ██████████

E-mail: ██████████

Web: ██████████

Sep: *Romanticism Comes of Age* by Owen Barfield

October: *The Silver Trumpet* by Owen Barfield

November: *Till We Have Faces* by C.S. Lewis

PENNSYLVANIA

██████████ *C.S. LEWIS AND FRIENDS*

Neil Gussman, ██████████

E-mail: ██████████

SOUTH CAROLINA

██████████ *THE COLUMBIA C.S. LEWIS SOCIETY*

Nina Fowler, ██████████

E-mail: ██████████

WASHINGTON

██████████ *MITHLOND*

Matthew Winslow, ██████████

Web: ██████████

WISCONSIN

██████████ *THE BURRAHOBBITS*

Jeffrey & Jan Long, ██████████

Special Interest Group

THE ELVISH LINGUISTIC FELLOWSHIP

Carl Hostetter, ██████████

Newsletter, *Vinyar Tengwar*. Journal, *Parma*
Eldalamberon: Christopher Gilson, ██████████

Correspondence Group

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

Laura Krentz, ██████████

Correspondence circular. Web: ██████████

Online Discussion Groups

MYTHSOC E-LIST

Society activities and general book-related discussion.

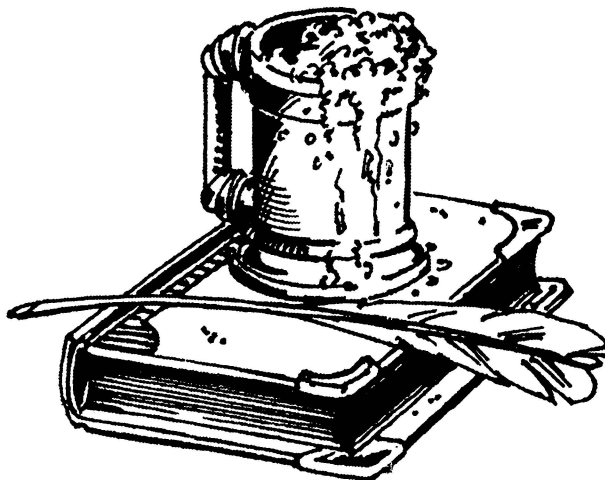
Sign up: ██████████ or contact

Joan Marie Verba: ██████████

COINHERENCE

Online discussion of Charles Williams

David Davis: E-mail: ██████████



Book Reviews: C.S. Lewis Scholarship

LELAND RYKEN AND MARJORIE LAMP MEAD, *A Reader's Guide through the Wardrobe: Exploring C.S. Lewis's Classic Story*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005. ISBN 0-8308-3289-0, tp, 192 pp., \$13.00.

CHRISTIN DITCHFIELD, *A Family Guide to Narnia: Biblical Truths in C.S. Lewis's "The Chronicles of Narnia"*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2003. ISBN 1-58134-515-1, tp, 208 pp., \$12.99.

CHRISTIN DITCHFIELD, *A Family Guide to "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe"*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2005. ISBN 1-58134-725-1, tp, 128 pp., \$7.99.

Ryken and Mead announce, "We have written a reader's guide for adult readers of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*" (p. 9). Actually, the book seems to be for teenagers and non-English majors among adults, for it covers some obvious topics—plot, characterization, setting; utopia (avoiding the genre's political meaning), fairy tale, romance, myth; archetypes, realism; other fictional techniques. The organization is chapter-by-chapter, but the changing topics of discussion keep this approach from being monotonous. Ryken and Mead also take to heart Lewis's comment that it is the critic's job to begin discussions, not to exhaust them.

The first section of the book is that chapter-by-chapter survey, with a retrospective consideration afterward. The format includes several photographs with chapter one, two small photographs with other chapters, and a section of them on pp. 122-28; lots of questions "For Reflection or Discussion" in shaded boxes; boxed sidebars on related topics; and inserted quotations between sections of text.

The second, shorter section of the book has an account of Lewis's writing the Narnian books; a "reception history" of *LW&W* (Ryken and Mead omit a negative review or two); an intelligent

Christian discussion; a very brief biography of Lewis (surely he didn't receive a "medical discharge from the army," p. 168); and a discussion of the "correct order" in which to read the Narnian books (they agree with Schakel).

Overall, a very intelligent discussion (as might be expected from the authors), although the format with its questions suggests the audience will be largely limited to church discussion groups. The book also has a nice contrast of magic in Narnia and in Harry Potter's world (pp. 88-91).

Ditchfield, the author of the two other books, published her *Family Guide to Narnia* in 2003, and she has used some of the original material to produce her *Family Guide to LW&W*. Her basic approach is very Biblical in both of her books. In the original, she goes through each of the Narnian books chapter by chapter, with Biblical parallels: "Lucy discovers that there is much more to the mysterious wardrobe than meets the eye. Jesus told His disciples not to judge things by their appearance (*John* 7:24)." (Other points are less simplistic.) Ditchfield in her Preface (*Narnia*)/Introduction (*LW&W*) indicates she expects parents, grandparents, or teachers to introduce one or two of these parallels as seem best as each chapter is read.

For her volume on *LW&W*, she revises the preface of the original book; adds two biographical chapters; retitles the original introduction to *LW&W* as "The Story within the Story"; reprints the chapter-by-chapter Biblical commentary; adds a "Does He Know? Do You?" chapter about repentance; adds a "Continuing the Adventure" with recipes for an English tea, suggestions for creative activities, and a list of the other Narnian books with brief summaries; adds a bibliography of other books, websites, media, and places to visit (the Wade Center and the Kilns). Illustrations in *LW&W* are by Justin Gerard of the Portland Studios.

Ditchfield's approach is typical of a number of books that have appeared on the *Chronicles of Narnia*, and pleasanter than some in its treatment. It should be noted that Ryken and Mead write:

It is inadvisable to preface a reading of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by declaring to a child that Aslan is Jesus. Such an approach unintentionally fails to allow the narrative so speak in an affective way to the imagination of the child. (64)

Ryken and Mead also write, "Attempts to list Bible verses for every chapter of the book are word-association exercises, not insights into the story as Lewis told it. The arbitrary nature of the exercise is apparent when we stop to consider that we could do the same thing while reading the daily newspaper" (95). On the other hand, Ditchfield says, "Consciously and perhaps at times even unconsciously, Lewis wound powerful biblical truths through every chapter, every scene in *The Chronicles*. His deeply rooted faith naturally found expression in everything he wrote" (*LW&W* 6). Most members of The Mythopoeic Society probably side with Ryken and Mead, but these are good examples of the two ways *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is approached.

Reviewed by Joe R. Christopher



LOUIS MARKOS, *Lewis Agonistes: How C.S. Lewis can Train us to Wrestle with the Modern and Postmodern World*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2003. ISBN 080542778-3, pb, xv + 174 pp., \$19.99.

From Chad Walsh's pioneering *C.S. Lewis: Apostle to the Skeptics* (1949) to Michael Aeschliman's *The Restitution of Man: C.S. Lewis and the Case against Scientism* (1983) to John Beversluis's *C.S. Lewis and the Search for Rational Religion* (1985) to Scott Burson and

Jerry Walls' *C.S. Lewis and Francis Schaeffer: Lessons for a New Century from the most Influential Apologists of our Time* (1998) to Victor Reppert's *C.S. Lewis's Dangerous Idea: In Defense of the Argument from Reason* (2002), a number of substantial attempts have been made to evaluate C.S. Lewis as a Christian apologist. In some ways the best of these studies is *Lewis Agonistes* by Louis Markos, professor of English at Houston Baptist University. The title means "Lewis the wrestler," from the Greek *αγών* (*agon*), an athletic contest or struggle. It nicely captures the fact that for Lewis, apologetics was not simply a polite academic hobby, but rather a phase of the battle of light against darkness, a struggle for minds and hearts with the eternal souls of men and women at stake.

As a general guide to Lewis's apologetic work, *Lewis Agonistes* is clearly the class of the field. Walsh is dated, Beversluis unsympathetic and tendentious, Aeschliman and Reppert excellent but limited in scope to one issue or argument. Markos is comprehensive, covering not only the standard nonfiction works (*Mere Christianity*, *Miracles*, *Problem of Pain*, etc.) but also showing how Lewis's fiction, literary scholarship, and works such as *Surprised by Joy* and *A Grief Observed* contribute to a holistic approach in which the modern estrangement between Reason and Imagination is overcome. The book is organized thematically, first covering Lewis's preparation for his wrestling in both education and life experience and then analyzing his response to five challenges: science and the modernist paradigm, the new age and neopaganism, evil and suffering, the meaning of art and language, and heaven and hell. The emphasis is not so much on Lewis's arguments in themselves (which, however valid, must be constantly updated) as on Lewis as a role model for our own apologetic wrestling. In the process Markos gets beyond the typical caricature of Lewis as a reac-

tionary to elucidate the wholeness of his approach, which responds to the challenges of modernity “both by means of a reactive defense that takes us back to an older, medieval counter-vision and a proactive offense that looks ahead to a new synthesis of ancient and modern.” (p. x)

The general excellence of Markos’s treatment is marred by an occasional yielding to the temptation to psychologize, speculating about the sources of Lewis’s own need to wrestle toward a synthesis of Reason and Imagination. I also think he misses the point in his attempt to show how Lewis might have responded to Postmodern forms of intellectual nihilism such as Deconstruction. Markos contrasts “conservative Evangelicals who argue that language is meaningful because it is not slippery” with “liberal theorists who claim that it is slippery and therefore meaningless.” He finds a middle way in “poetry that cries out on the rooftops that language is more meaningful precisely because it is slippery” (p. 130). But why use the word “slip-

pery,” which concedes too much, when a more positive description like “rich” would have achieved his purpose equally well? One can’t resist imagining a Lewisian “Distinguo!” being thundered over a mug of Eagle and Child beer at that point. For a much better treatment of this question see Bruce Edwards’ outstanding study, *A Rhetoric of Reading: C.S. Lewis’s Defense of Western Literacy* (1986).

These are about the only flaws I can find in a very fine work, except the fact that a book of this much intellectual substance rather demands the bibliography and index which are inexplicably missing at the end. Markos avoids the endless dreary summarizing and rehashing which makes most secondary works on Lewis a waste of time that would have been better spent re-reading (or reading) Lewis and give us readable analysis that is profitable to follow even when I think it is wrong. And it is mostly right.

Reviewed by Donald T. Williams



'Caught by a Rumour':

News and Notes

Calls for Papers

International Conference for the Fantastic in the Arts 28, March 14-18, 2007, Wyndham Fort Lauderdale Airport Hotel. The focus of ICFA-28 is on issues of gender and sexuality, long a concern of the fantastic in literature, film, and other media.

Fighting females show that the hero doesn't have to be a guy, but it's just as rewarding to examine the construction of the masculine hero in space opera, sword-and-sorcery, and superhero comics. In graphic novels, book cover illustrations, and art, the gendered Other is the BEM, the elf, the alien, the vampire. Awards such as the Tiptree and the Lambda, and the success of WisCon, speak to the importance of this theme to the communities of the fantastic. We look forward to papers on the work of Guest of Honor Geoff Ryman, author of the Tiptree Award-winning *Air*; Guest Scholar Marina Warner; and Special Guest Writer Melissa Scott, winner of the Lambda Award. We also welcome proposals for individual papers and for academic sessions and panels on any aspect of the fantastic in any media.

Deadline: November 30, 2006; electronic correspondence welcome. Proposals must be sent to the appropriate Division Head (see web site for details: [REDACTED]), and must include a 500-word abstract and appropriate bibliography indicating the project's scholarly or theoretical context. Presenters must be members of IAFA at the time of the conference. Be sure to indicate all audio-visual equipment needs in this initial proposal; later A/V requests cannot be guaranteed.

Tolkien/Lewis Lecture

Fans of *The Lord of the Rings* and the *Chronicles of Narnia* will be treated to "An Evening with

Thomas Shippey: Narnia and Middle-earth: Lewis, Tolkien, the Magic Art" at the University of South Florida September 28, 7 p.m., at Traditions Hall on the Tampa campus. This event is free and open to the public.

Shippey was a professor at Oxford University at the same time as Tolkien, and he moved into Tolkien's previously-held position as chair of English language and medieval literature at Leeds University. He wrote the acclaimed *J.R.R. Tolkien: Author of the Century* as well as numerous books and articles on Tolkien and on medieval and fantasy literature. Shippey also has edited or co-edited several volumes on these genres and currently serves as editor of the journal *Studies in Medievalism*. Shippey also will visit classes in English and mass communications the day before when USF students will have the opportunity to meet the speaker.

Conference

The fourth annual Northern Michigan C.S. Lewis Festival takes place this fall in Petoskey, featuring scholarly seminars, community arts programs, theater performances, and more. The kick-off weekend is October 26-29 premiering the forthcoming PBS documentary "Myth, Imagination & Faith," including panel discussions with scholars Reza Aslan, Dr. Christopher Mitchell of the [REDACTED] and co-producers Chip Duncan and David Crouse. Saturday seminar leaders for "Windows to Other Worlds: C.S. Lewis on Imagination & Literature" are Dr. Peter Schakel of [REDACTED] and Dr. Leland Ryken of [REDACTED]. Other festival events take place over several months: visit [REDACTED] for details or call [REDACTED] "To Narnia and the North!"

Obituary: Mary Stolzenbach

One of the necessary but sad duties of my role as Corresponding Secretary of the Mythopoeic Society is writing messages like this one, when one of our members or one of their close family members passes away. Often it's someone I don't know well personally, even if I recognize their importance to the Society. With Mary, of course, it's quite different. Not only was she an absolute pillar of the Mythopoeic Society for many years; I considered her a personal friend. I have wonderful memories, for example, of attending the Mythcon she co-chaired in Nashville only three years ago—it was one of the best. I remember her infectious enthusiasm, charm and wit as we sat in our pajamas one evening and she read from some well-loved old children's books and waxed enthusiastic over the illustrations.

Many of us in the Society were looking forward to seeing Mary at Mythcon this year in Oklahoma, and were corresponding with her by email just before her accident. It was a great blow to learn of her passing just as the conference was starting. I hope you'll be pleased to hear that it become something of a memorial to her, and she was honored many times in ways large and small, funny and serious, personal and public. The Clerihew Contest (which she notably swept in the past), was named in her honor; we finished and sang the Oklahoma/Mythopoeia filksong she was composing mere days before; a verse in her honor was offered in our traditional "Drunken Hobbit" song at closing ceremonies. Her name was invoked with both sadness and affection at the beginning, the end, and throughout the entire conference.

Mary's contributions to the Mythopoeic Society were many, not the least of which was her excellent recruiting ability—bringing both Ted Sherman and Grace Monk into the fold, for example. Their continued presence will always remind us what we owe Mary and how much we will miss her in the future.

Because we're a small group, it truly does feel like we've lost a member of our extended family. Mary was a lovely and remarkable woman, with a rare combination of intelligence, humor and grace. I wish we could have had her with us longer. Throughout the recent Mythcon (and often since) every time I think of Mary I think of Aslan's words in *The Last Battle*—"The dream is ended: this is the morning." I know Mary's enjoying her morning.

Edith L. Crowe, Mythopoeic Society Corresponding Secretary

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

Mythopoeic Society Web Site:

www.mythsoc.org

Membership and Subscriptions

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

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

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

Mythopoeic Society Orders Department

Submissions for *Mythprint*

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

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Eleanor M. Farrell, Editor

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The Mythopoeic Society



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