

MYTHPRINT

The Monthly Bulletin of the Mythopoeic Society

Vol. 44 No. 5

May 2007

Whole No. 302



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Illustrations

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See inside back cover

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

Feature Review: *The Company They Keep*

DIANA PAVLAC GLYER, *The Company They Keep: C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien as Writers in Community*. Kent, OH: The Kent State University Press, 2007. ISBN 0-87338-890-9, tp, [xix] + 293 pp., \$45.

How writers influence other writers is one of the trickier questions in literary criticism, and it is especially complex when the writers in question not only knew each other, but met once or twice a week for years to read what they had written aloud and freely commented on their works in progress. Diana Glycer's *The Company They Keep* seeks to explain how the authors that comprise the Oxford Inklings—J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams, Owen Barfield, Warren Lewis, and the fourteen others associated with that circle—formed a community in which they reacted to each other's fictional, poetic, historical, and critical writings, gave each other feedback and criticism, and generally contributed to what Tolkien calls the "leaf-mould" or "Pot of Soup" in which their creativity was nurtured. Glycer builds upon classic studies in Inklings scholarship such as Humphrey Carpenter's 1979 *The Inklings* and other works on the Inklings together or individually. She questions the notion some have suggested that the Inklings were too dissimilar to influence each other by providing a useful theoretical framework for analyzing the ties between the men and their works. Indeed, she demonstrates how alone the Inklings would never have written the masterpieces that they produced in many respects because of the pressure and encouragement they exerted upon each other in that close-knit group.

Glycer uses a framework for understanding writing communities developed by the rhetoric and communications specialist Karen Burke LeFevre to explain how the Inklings came to influence one another. LeFevre's model describes how writers in an intimate circle relate to one another by assuming different functions as they

work together, those of resonators (ones who form "a friendly, interested, supportive audience" for their fellow writers), opponents, editors, and collaborators. To these Glycer adds the role of referents, writers writing about each other or including each other as characters or voices in their works, and she devotes a chapter to each role in which she examines the various ways in which the Inklings interacted as a community.

After sketching out a brief history of the Inklings from their beginnings in the early 1930s, Glycer describes how they served as resonators by giving each other valuable encouragement and feedback in their writing efforts. C.S. Lewis's pressure upon Tolkien to finish *The Lord of the Rings* and their "wager" between the two to write novels about a space journey and a time journey novel are excellent examples of the Inklings acting as resonators. Glycer also cites numerous other examples such as Lewis's praise for Barfield's and Nevill Coghill's poetry, his brother's historical writings, and his respect for Williams as a writer, as well as Tolkien's high opinion of Lewis's fiction and scholarly texts. This section contains some interesting discussions of how the Inklings created an atmosphere of mutual encouragement and support that kindled their imaginations and fostered many of their writing projects.

Glycer's discussion of how the Inklings were often cast in the role of opponents, questioning each other's ideas and even their prose style, covers the "Great War" in letters between Lewis and Barfield, Tolkien's dislike of the Narnia books, Hugo Dyson's antipathy for Tolkien's Elves during the Inklings' meetings, and other instances of Inklings taking issue with the work of their companions. Glycer even suggests that the Inklings' criticism may have prompted Tolkien to drop the epilogue to *The Lord of the Rings*. In the chapter on the Inklings as editors, Glycer notes how

Lewis's comments helped Tolkien shape *The Lay of Leithian* and altered much of *The Lord of the Rings* (especially in cutting out some of the excessive "hobbit talk" in which he frequently indulged). Barfield's suggestion that Lewis warn his young readers against locking themselves in wardrobes is another interesting case of editorial assistance. Among the various instances of collaborations, both finished and unfinished, between members of the Inklings, Glycer focuses on such famous examples as the Lewis brother's Boxen stories, Lewis's collaborative efforts with Barfield and Williams, as well as posthumous Tolkien books that his son Christopher, the youngest member of the Inklings, edited and published. The penultimate chapter on the Inklings as referents who appear in each other's writings centers on how the Inklings included themselves in their works (Tolkien as Niggle, for example) and especially how they incorporated themselves into their fictional universes (Treebeard's "booming voice" he inherited from Lewis, Ransom's resemblance to Williams, the parallels between Tolkien's Notion Club and Inklings, etc.). Here she also covers the many dedications, reviews, memorials, and obituaries the members of the Inklings wrote on behalf of each other. Glycer then concludes with a brief survey of criticism on literary influence to demonstrate how the Inklings formed a collaborative, mutually supportive community in which the individual authors' creativity could thrive. As she aptly puts it, writers such the Inklings "influence and are influenced by the company they keep" (226).

A valuable addition to this book is the appendix by David Bratman which offers short biographical sketches for the nineteen Inklings members; this appendix makes the book an excellent reference source in addition to an excellent piece of criticism. Glycer's prose is not only a delight to read, but it is also full of keen analysis

and valuable insight into the nature of the Inklings' complicated interrelationship; even the notes are packed with many fascinating details. *The Company They Keep* is truly an important contribution to Inklings studies as well as an excellent example of how literary critics can approach the thorny issue of influence in a careful, balanced manner.

Reviewed by David Oberhelman



At the offset I confess I am not an Inklings scholar and this is assuredly a scholarly work; I daresay every Tolkien, Lewis, Williams, Barfield scholar (et al) will read and deeply appreciate this book. Thus I do not come to praise Diana for her excellent scholarship, well-nigh exhaustive—instead, I write for those people who might avoid the book because it is scholarly and tell them: don't!

You will enjoy it first because it's an entertaining read, chock-full of accounts of Inklings interactions (and if you're reading *Mythprint* you already like these men, or at least their work). Second, it's a fascinating examination of "influence" in its broad understanding, what it is to be interconnected by friendship, interests, goals, scholarship, creativity and faith. Third, it details concrete assistance they provided each other as editors, promoters, and collaborators, and referents they made to each other in their work. But, for me, it is most stimulating as a look at creative support: what it takes to effectively encourage and exhort one another in the exercise of creative gifts.

Every member of the Mythopoeic Society has undoubtedly considered this remarkable group and thought how amazing and remarkable to have Tolkien, Lewis, Williams all together in the same writers' group, how incredible! As Diana

Paxson says in *The Baby and the Bird*, “where I had rather been a fly upon the wall” is at an Inklings meeting, reading and talking and drinking. Through this book one is able to appreciate that it wasn’t blind luck that brought these authors together; this particular blend of individuals served to stimulate, appreciate, critique, and occasionally excoriate one another, in some instances all but pry the manuscript out of still-polishing hands and into those of the publisher. This dynamic is perhaps best seen in Tolkien: he would still be Tolkien without the Inklings, but would he have ever finished *The Lord of the Rings* without the dynamic of the group, would it be merely “the new *Hobbit*”? Happily we’ll never know, because we live in the universe where the Inklings met for nearly two decades and Tolkien’s great epic was voted “the book of the century” in numerous end-of-the-millennium polls.

There are present day applications in this book: how can we be effective resonators, collaborators, even opponents, and thus encourage our own creativity and that of others around us? Have we become phobic about the word “influence,” stuck in our romantic notions of the

lonely genius? Diana examines this issue in the final chapter of her book and I found myself thinking what good thing it is that science and mathematics don’t eschew “influence” but rather build freely upon the theories and discoveries of others; I suspect there is an exaltation of artistic vanity in the view that a work is somehow diminished if “influence” is perceived. I don’t believe it’s possible to avoid “influence”—it is entirely pervasive, an inescapable part of being human. Glycer argues these men were more fully themselves because of the Inklings, more individual and distinct for the contrast and encouragement, and I am persuaded she is right.

While I personally prefer footnotes, every chapter contains its endnotes, full of gems. The book includes an appendix, “The Inklings: Their Lives and Works,” by David Bratman. A rich and fascinating read, highly recommended; link through the Society’s webpage and buy it on Amazon for under \$30.

Reviewed by Lynn Maudlin



Correction

The review of Lynn Flewelling’s *Tamír Triad* in the April 2007 issue of *Mythprint* contained a text error. This is the correct version of paragraph 2 of Anne Petty’s review:

The crux of the trilogy is the Oracle of Afra’s prophecy that “So long as a daughter of Thelátimos’ line defends and rules, Skala shall never be subjugated.” From that point onward, as long as the rule remained matriarchal, the country flourished. But whenever a usurping prince managed to take the throne, the land became blighted with plague and famine. Such is the state of affairs when the *Tamír Triad* begins. Cursed kings have made certain that no females who might inherit the throne have survived ... until now. In a collusion of wild earth magic with intellectual Orëska wizardry, the current king’s newborn niece (daughter of his sister, the deposed rightful heir, the doomed Princess Ariani) is secretly saved by changing her into a boy at the moment of birth.

Mythprint apologizes for the error.

Activity Calendar

Marion VanLoo
Membership & Discussion Group Secretary



Prospective Groups

CALIFORNIA

[REDACTED] *LOTHLORIEN*

Linda Sundstrom, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

FLORIDA

[REDACTED] *HOBBITON*

Paul S. Ritz, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] *ERYN GALEN*

B.L. McCauley, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

INDIANA

[REDACTED] *CERIN AMROTH*

Ellen Denham, E-mail: [REDACTED]
Web: [REDACTED]

MISSOURI

[REDACTED] *THE KHAZAD*

Gary & Sylvia Hunnewell, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] E-mail: [REDACTED]

NORTH CAROLINA

[REDACTED] *THE CAROLINA TOLKIEN SOCIETY*

Matt & Renita Peeler [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

OHIO

[REDACTED]
David Staley [REDACTED]

Web site: [REDACTED]

Chartered Groups

CALIFORNIA

[REDACTED] *MYDGARD*

Lee Speth, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

May: *The Phantom of the Opera* by Gaston Leroux

June: *The Golden Compass* by Philip Pullman

[REDACTED] *KHAZAD-DÛM*

Amy Wisniewski & Edith Crowe, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

June: *Swordspoint* and *The Privilege of the Sword* by

Ellen Kushner

Sep: *Three Days to Never* and *Declare* by Tim Powers

December: Annual Reading & Eating Meeting

COLORADO

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

Patricia Yarrow, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] E-mail: [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

[REDACTED] *KNOSSOS*

Mimi Stevens, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

May: The Great Romeo and Juliet Taste Test

June: Virgil's *Aeneid*

July: *Stories of Your Life and Others* by Ted Chiang

August: *Dracula* by Bram Stoker

HAWAII

[REDACTED] *SAMMATH NAUR*

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

Web: [REDACTED]

June: *The Book of Lost Things* by John Connolly

July: *The King Must Die* by Mary Renault

August: *The Hobbit* by J.R.R. Tolkien

ILLINOIS

[REDACTED] *THE FAR WESTFARTHING SMIAL*

Mike Foster, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] E-mail: [REDACTED]

May: *The Children of Hurin* by J.R.R. Tolkien

June: *The Silmarillion* (Ch. 22)
July: *The Silmarillion* (Ch. 23)

IOWA

██████████ *ALFHEIM*

Doug Rossman, ██████████
██████████ E-mail: ██████████

LOUISIANA

██████████ *ROKE*

Sally Budd, ██████████

██████████ E-mail: ██████████

MICHIGAN

██████████ *GALADHREMMIN-ENNORATH*

Dave & Grace Lovelace, ██████████
██████████

MINNESOTA

██████████ *RIVENDELL*

David Lenander, ██████████

Web: ██████████

NEVADA

██████████ *CRICKHOLLOW*

Joanne Burnett, ██████████

██████████ E-mail: ██████████

Web: ██████████

NEW YORK

██████████ *HEREN ISTARION*

(*THE NEW YORK TOLKIEN SOCIETY*)

Anthony Burdge/Jessica Burke, ██████████
██████████

Web: ██████████

OREGON

Donovan Mattole, ██████████

██████████ E-mail: ██████████

Web: ██████████

██████████ *BYWATER INKLINGS*

Gary Lundquist, ██████████

██████████ E-mail: ██████████

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: mwinslow.firinn.org/mithlond/

May: *Tales of the Otori* (Book I) by Lian Hearn

June: *The Children of Hurin* by J.R.R. Tolkien

July: *The Twelve Kingdoms* by Fuyumi Ono

August: *Harry Potter VII* by J.K. Rowling

WISCONSIN

██████████ *THE BURRAHOBBITS*

Jeffrey & Jan Long, ██████████
██████████

Special Interest Group

THE ELVISH LINGUISTIC FELLOWSHIP

██████████ Newsletter: *Vinyar Tengwar*. Carl

Hostetter, ██████████

██████████ Journal: *Parma Eldalamberon*.

Christopher Gilson, ██████████
██████████

Correspondence Group

ONCE UPON A TIME (children's fantasy)

Laura Krentz, ██████████
██████████

Web: ██████████

Online Discussion Groups

MYTHSOC E-LIST

Society activities and general discussion. Sign up:

██████████ or contact Joan

Marie Verba: ██████████

COINHERENCE

Online discussion of Charles Williams

David Davis: E-mail ██████████

Mythopoeic Society News

Mythlore 97/98

(vol. 25 nos. 3/4) Spring/Summer 2007

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- Editorial (Janet Brennan Croft)
- Fantastical Fact, Home, or Other? The Imagined 'Medieval' in C.S. Lewis (Alison Searle)
- Feudal Values, Vassalage, and Fealty in *The Lord of the Rings* (Colleen Donnelly)
- Battling the Woman Warrior: Females and Combat in Tolkien and Lewis (Candice Fredrick and Sam McBride)
- Finding Woman's Role in *The Lord of the Rings* (Melissa McCrory Hatcher)
- Through a Dark Lens: Jackson's *Lord of the Rings* as Abject Horror (R.D. Hall)
- The Monstrosity of the Gaze: Critical Problems with a Film Adaptation of *The Lord of the Rings* (Allison Harl)
- Galadriel and Morgan le Fey: Tolkien's Redemption of the Lady of the Lacuna (Susan Carter)
- The Fall and Repentance of Galadriel (Romuald Ian Lakowski)
- *Prince Caspian* and *Child Christopher* and *Goldilind the Fair* (Robert Boenig)
- Pullman, Lewis, MacDonald, and the Anxiety of Influence (William Gray)
- The Ogre Blinded and *The Lord of the Rings* (Daniel Peretti)
- Beorn and Tom Bombadil: A Tale of Two Heroes (Paul W. Lewis)
- Meaning, Meanings, and Epistemology in C.S. Lewis (Charlie W. Starr)

Reviews

- *The J.R.R. Tolkien Companion and Guide*. Christina Scull and Wayne G. Hammond (David D. Oberhelman)
- *The Lord of the Rings and Philosophy: One Book to Rule Them All*. Edited by Gregory Bassham and Eric Bronson (Clark Hutton)

Mythopoeic Press

The Mythopoeic Press Announces a New Title Coming Soon: *Past Watchful Dragons: Fantasy and Faith in the World of C.S. Lewis*, edited by Amy H. Sturgis.

This volume provides a broad sample of the research presented at the "Past Watchful Dragons: Fantasy and Faith in the World of C.S. Lewis" international conference held at Belmont University on November 3-5, 2005. The contributing scholars reflect a truly interdisciplinary discussion representing the fields of literature, theology, history, and popular culture. The assembled essays offer insights on the messages of C.S. Lewis's fiction and nonfiction, the dramatic adaptations of his work, the influence of his faith, and his relevance to related fantasy literature and authors as contemporary as J.K. Rowling. These diverse contributions combine to offer a better understanding and appreciation of the life and legacy of C.S. Lewis.

Essays in this volume cover topics such as *The Chronicles of Narnia*, adaptations, Lewis and literature, Lewis and faith, and related authors. The volume will be available in the summer of 2007. Check the Mythopoeic Press website soon for additional details and ordering information:



The 38th Annual Mythopoeic Conference

Mythcon XXXVIII

Theme: "Becoming Adept: The Journey to Mastery"

Clark Kerr Conference Center

Berkeley, California, August 3-6, 2007

Guests of Honor: Ellen Kushner and Delia Sherman

Ellen Kushner and Delia Sherman are both Mythopoeic Fantasy Award winning authors for their novels *Thomas the Rhymer* and *The Porcelain Dove* respectively. Both have new novels appearing in 2006, Kushner's *The Privilege of the Sword* and Sherman's *Changeling*. Kushner's public radio series *Sound & Spirit* is a renowned weekly program. Both have made great contributions to the mythopoeic and interstitial arts, and we are proud to welcome them to Mythcon 38.

The Mythopoeic Society discusses myth, fantasy and imaginative literature in discussion groups across the U.S. and on the internet, in newsletters and scholarly books and journals, and at its annual Mythopoeic Conference (Mythcon). Inspired by the scholarly discussions and writings of the 1930s Oxford University group The Inklings (including C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, and Charles Williams), the Society began in California in 1967.

The conference will feature the usual blend of the scholarly (papers, panels, keynote addresses, presentation of the Mythopoeic Awards) and seasoned Mythcon traditions (auction, costume presentation, banquet, Golfimbul, the Not-Ready-for-Mythcon Players).

Conference membership

Feb. 2–July 15, 2007

Mythopoeic Society members	\$75
Non-members	\$85
Registered students, age 12 and up	\$50
Children under 12	free

If you are uncertain of your Society membership status, please contact our Membership Secretary, Marion Van Loo, at [REDACTED]

or make checks payable to The Mythopoeic Society, and mail to: Bonnie Rauscher, [REDACTED]
10th Street, Berkeley, CA 94710. E-mail: [REDACTED]

Room and Board

Rates are per person, for Friday dinner through Monday breakfast, including banquet, and three nights lodging. Payment must be received by July 15, 2007.

- \$275 for residence hall, double occupancy
- \$335 for residence hall, single room
- \$290 for suites, double occupancy
- \$365 for suites, single room

Online registration (using Paypal): [REDACTED]

The Future of *Mythprint*

I'm sure most of us have been made aware (more or less painfully) of the postage increases effective May 14th. These affect *Mythprint* quite drastically: while international postage only increases a small amount (about \$0.10 per issue), the postage for mailing within the U.S. has jumped a whopping 54%, from \$0.52 to \$0.80 for one ounce. Printing costs are on the increase, as well.

These issues, plus the fact that the bulletin will have a new editor in 2008, seem to indicate that it's a good time to consider options for changing *Mythprint's* format, schedule, etc. The Stewards plan to include this topic during the annual members' meeting at Mythcon in August, but I would like subscribers to start thinking about this beforehand, so that we can get your feedback in order to make a satisfactory transition.

First, is a monthly Mythopoeic Society newsletter necessary? Or can and should *Mythprint* change to a bi-monthly (or even quarterly) publication schedule? With our widespread membership, local news items have taken on a less important function than way back in the Elder Days when it was possible for a large number of members to physically get together for frequent events. And with a well-organized and regularly updated web site, most of our members have access to current projects and new publications, upcoming conferences, and necessary information for contacting the right department within the Society. But what do *you* think?

Next, even with a reduced number of issues published, a subscription price increase is needed. *Mythprint* barely breaks even now—and that is partly due to some shockingly good printing prices I have found but which may not be available to the next editor—and could use a little cushion for future cost increases which will inevitably occur. Would you be willing to pay \$25 or more for a regular Mythopoeic Society annual membership (which includes the bulletin)?

Finally, the topic of electronic publication rears its frightening head. I do not expect that the entire *Mythprint* subscriber base would support having the bulletin solely in electronic format (PDF is the logical choice), but how many of you would be interested in, or maybe even prefer, receiving *Mythprint* electronically? This would require many logistical considerations, including layout changes, subscription pricing decisions, method of distribution, etc. Suggestions are very welcome!

Generally, any new changes will be implemented by the next *Mythprint* editor; I don't anticipate even a subscription increase for the remainder of 2007. But ... the more input the Council of Stewards receives from our membership, the better we can make sure our bulletin continues to be a valuable part of the Mythopoeic Society. So please let us know your thoughts and ideas; you can write to any member of the Council of Stewards (e-mails are all on the MythSoc web site). And don't forget that we are still looking for a new *Mythprint* editor, so if you are interested in getting more information about the position, please don't be shy.

Thanks for your support!!



Eleanor Farrell
Mythprint editor

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.

Postage and Non-member Subscription Rates

	Members	Institutions and non-members
First class U.S.	included	\$20/year
Canada (air)	\$7/year additional for postage	\$27/year
Overseas (air)	\$16/year additional for postage	\$36/year

The number in the upper right corner of your mailing label is the "Whole Number" of the last issue of your subscription. Checks should be made out to the Mythopoeic Society. Foreign orderers should use U.S. funds if possible; otherwise add 15% to the current exchange rate. Back issues of *Mythprint* are available for \$1 each (U.S. postage included)

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:

Mythprint

Eleanor M. Farrell, Editor

E-mail:



The Mythopoeic Society



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your final issue.*

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the platform administrator at archives@mythsoc.org or the *Mythprint* editor at mythprint@mythsoc.org.

