

MYTHPRINT

The Monthly Bulletin of the Mythopoeic Society

Vol. 44 Nos. 9-10

September/October 2007

Whole Nos. 306-7



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Table of Contents

Mythcon 39 Announcement and Call for Papers 3

Book Reviews: Fiction

Spirits That Walk in Shadow by Nina Kiriki Hoffman (Pauline J. Alama) 4

Shelter by Susan Palwick (Berni Phillips Bratman) 4

Larklight by Philip Reeve (Laura Krentz) ... 5A *Knight's Story* by Paul Stewart and Chris Riddell (Nick Smith) 6

Mythopoeic Society News 7

Activity Calendar 8

Book Reviews: Inklings

Ents, Elves and Eriador: The Environmental Vision of J.R.R. Tolkien
 by Matthew Dickerson and Jonathan Evans (David Bratman) 10

The C.S. Lewis Chronicles by Colin Duriez (Joe R. Christopher) 11

The Night Is Far Spent: A Treasury of Thomas Howard (Joe R. Christopher) 12

The Image of the City and Other Essays by Charles Williams (Ryder W. Miller) 13

Illustrations

Cover: "The Baby Taliesin" by Patrick Wynne © 1989

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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, November 1st for the December issue).

The 39th Annual Mythopoeic Conference

Mythcon XXXIX

Theme: "The Valkyrie and the Goddess:

The Woman Warrior in Fantasy"

Central Connecticut State University

New Britain, Connecticut, August 15-18, 2008



Call for Papers

Our theme is the use of female imagery in the traditionally masculine realm of battle, as expressed in the literature of myth and fantasy. More broadly, it can include fantasy writers' depictions of women in heroic roles, women responding actively and positively to situations of conflict and danger, and the questions of aesthetics and narrative structure that such issues can raise. Papers dealing with these conference themes are especially encouraged. We also welcome papers focusing on the work and interests of the Inklings (especially J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, and Charles Williams), of our Guests of Honor, and other fantasy authors and themes. Papers from a variety of critical perspectives and disciplines are welcome.

Each paper will be given a one-hour slot to allow for questions, but individual papers should be timed for oral presentation in 40 minutes maximum. Two presenters who wish to give short, related papers may also share a one-hour slot. Participants are encouraged to submit papers chosen for presentation at the conference to *Mythlore*, the refereed journal of the Mythopoeic Society. All papers should conform to the *MLA Style Manual* (2nd edition).

Paper abstracts (250 words maximum), along with contact information, should be sent to the Papers Coordinator at the following address (e-mail is preferable) by 15 April, 2008. Please include your AV requests and the projected time needed for your presentation.

Submissions should be sent to: Alexei Kondratiev, Mythcon 39 Papers Coordinator, 35-12 161st Street Flushing, NY 11358. E-mail: [REDACTED]

Conference membership

Mythopoeic Society members	\$50
Non-members	\$60
Registered students, age 12 and up	\$40
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: Emily Rauscher, Registrar, [REDACTED]

E-mail [REDACTED]

Book Reviews: Fiction

NINA KIRIKI HOFFMAN, *Spirits That Walk in Shadow*. New York: Viking, 2006. ISBN 0-670-06071-2, hc, 320 pp., \$17.99.

With her characteristic knack for blending the familiar with the weird, Nina Kiriki Hoffman brings her own magical world view to the common contemporary experience of a culture shock between college roommates. The result is a deft and absorbing Young Adult fantasy, one of Hoffman's best.

For 18-year-old Kim, art is more than a talent: it's a precious link to a lost way of thinking, the instinctive, emotional response to the world that precedes words. In the "picture side" of her mind, she sees emotions as colors and shapes. But lately she's been cut off from her creativity, in the grips of a major depression. She flees to college, dreading what her new roommate will think of her when she discovers what a mess she is inside.

Lucky for Kim, her roommate isn't just from another town: she's from another reality. Jaime is one of the Ilmonishti, a magical race who live secretly in rural American communities under laws of their own. Fleeing to college from her own past regrets and turbulent family life, Jaime's eager to discover what "normal" people are like: but what she finds isn't normal. She quickly discovers that Kim's depression isn't natural, but the work of a spiritual parasite. Time is running out, as Kim is nearly depleted, and each new attack of depression brings her to the verge of self-destruction. Desperate to save her new friend, Jaime reluctantly turns for help and advice to the Ilmonishti relatives she'd been so eager to escape.

Hoffman's portrayal of two cultures at odds—middle-class American college life and the Ilmonishti subculture—is admirably even-handed. The Ilmonishti are neither idealized nor demonized, and both roommates have had

about equal trouble "fitting in" with their own kind. While they struggle against a deadly threat, they're also wrestling with some of the issues that young adults typically face, deciding which parts of their background they want to keep, and which they want to reject.

In some ways, this story does to college what *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* did to high school, using a fantastical lens to show you things you may feel you've known all along. Just as a hell-mouth underneath my high school would have explained a great deal, finding out that my college roommate had an invisible household god would have explained certain things, too.

Kim and Jaime narrate alternate chapters, giving the reader an ironic double view of all their differences. The characters are engaging, and I particularly enjoyed reading about Kim's relationship with her "picture side," the inner source of her creativity—perhaps a window into the way Hoffman views her own creative process?

Whether or not the portrait of the artist is autobiographical, *Spirits That Walk in Shadow* shows Nina Kiriki Hoffman's talent in top form. I heartily recommend it to adolescent readers and to adults who haven't lost touch with the adolescent inside them.

Reviewed by Pauline J. Alama



SUSAN PALWICK, *Shelter*. New York: Tor, 2007. ISBN 978-0-312-86602-0, tp, 574 pp., \$15.95.

Palwick says in the acknowledgements that it took her fifteen years to write this book. It was well worth the wait. *Shelter* gives a glimpse of a not-too-distant San Francisco. Fear of AIDS has been displaced by an even more hideous disease, CV, a deadly and highly contagious virus whose effects link two survivors together to form the

core of *Shelter*. Roberta Danton survives CV but is orphaned by it and bounces from foster home to foster home. Meredith Walford survives CV and finds herself a permanent media target: not only has she survived this deadly disease, but her father, the fabulously wealthy Preston Walford, succumbed to it bodily and had his personality and memories downloaded to the Net. He is the first “translated” person. Rejected by his daughter, he turns to Roberta.

The story proper opens on a dark and stormy night: Meredith has returned to San Francisco. She begs her ex-husband to come get her. He does, although his Smart house does its best to dissuade him from going out into the storm. In his absence, the house opens itself to a homeless man, a “baggie,” because above all, a house is there to provide shelter. Meredith never actually connects with her ex-husband. Instead, she encounters Roberta, and in this storm each tells her story, her version of their intertwined lives from leaving the isolation ward of the hospital to this accidental reunion.

Palwick has given us a masterful look into the different ways people can be broken. Meredith and Roberta have each suffered terribly, and much of Roberta’s suffering is due to Meredith’s behavior. In this soon-to-be San Francisco, the only people of faith appear to be Gaia worshippers. “Green” may be the official religion, but practicality and soulessness are more common. Meredith’s mother is an artist. She sees that as “getting paid for having a better design sense than other people do.” She brings nothing of herself to her art. Children play at “cops and terrorists.” And compassion is now a mental disorder: “excessive altruism,” its practitioners mocked as being “exalted.”

As I was reading this, watching Meredith descend more and more into a cycle of lies and bad decisions, I was horrified by this character. Then I stopped and realized that she had no

choice. I was really horrified at the situation. You see, just as surgical lobotomies were once the fashionable treatment for many mental problems and as drugs are today, in the world of Palwick’s *Shelter*, criminals and, later, anyone deemed to have any kind of mental problem are infected with the CV virus and mind wiped, erasing all their personality, memories, and learned behaviors. To a survivor of the CV virus, there can be no more horrifying fate so, of course, she would work to avoid that for herself and anyone she loved.

This book is not mythopoeic fantasy. It fits more neatly in the science fiction genre, but science fiction filled with compassion, examining how we view personhood, so it should still appeal to many fantasy readers. Is Meredith’s father, Preston, still a person or is he just a program? One of the gentlest, most appealing characters in the book is an artificial intelligence, Fred, named for the great man who had that neighborhood on TV. So what makes us human? How human are we if we forget to have compassion? As Henry, the homeless man howls at one point, “Even the kitties get crumbs from the Friskies bowl!”

Reviewed by Berni Phillips Bratman



PHILIP REEVE, *Larklight*. New York:: Bloomsbury USA Children’s Books, 2006. ISBN 978-1599900209, hc, 250 pp., \$16.95.

Perhaps the first steampunk novel for kids, *Larklight* is a rollicking science fiction adventure. It is set in the 1850s, but in this alternate world the British Empire includes territories in outer space.

Based on the science of the time period, there is breathable air in space, and spaceships are

powered by alchemy. Art Mumby and his older sister Myrtle live in a rambling Victorian house in orbit beyond the moon, which is actually a spaceship. The children sometimes help their scientist father by catching space fish. Robots serve as housekeepers, and flying hogs help with the cleaning. When their house is attacked by giant white alien spiders, their father is wrapped in a spider cocoon and they fear that he is dead. The two children escape to the moon, where they are imprisoned in jars as food for giant grubs.

In the nick of time, they are rescued by the notorious space pirate, Jack Havock, who turns out to be much younger than his reputation indicated. Jack's crew includes a number of aliens, such as a large blue female lizard and a giant crab named Nipper. Together they set off on a series of wild adventures as they try to foil a mad scientist who is in cahoots with the spiders. Prissy Myrtle is kidnapped and has some adventures of her own, which she narrates in her diary.

Written in the style of an old-fashioned adventure story, the book has echoes of Jules Verne and L. Frank Baum with its wild plot twists, long chapter titles and detailed pen-and-ink illustrations. This book is a hoot to read. It will appeal to fans of *Gregor the Overlander* by Suzanne Collins, which also has giant creatures and lots of adventure. A sequel, *Starcross*, is due out in October.

Reviewed by Laura Krentz



PAUL STEWART & CHRIS RIDDELL, *A Knight's Story*.
Lake of Skulls, New York: Atheneum Books, 2004.
ISBN 0689872399, hc, 144 pp., \$9.95.
Joust of Honor, New York: Atheneum Books, 2005.
ISBN 0689872402, hc, 144 pp., \$9.95.

This is a historical fantasy series, written by the authors of *The Edge Chronicles*, and each one is a

quick and nifty little story. At first I thought it was just historical fiction, but there is, in fact, a bit of magic hidden away, revealed as each story progresses.

The main character is an unnamed independent knight, a free lance. In the first story, he has come to the end of a tournament season, his cash flow ruined by a mid-season jousting injury, so he is looking for work in the worst way . . . and finds it. A low-class provincial lord, a robber baron operating just under the radar of higher authorities, hires him to recover a crown from an island. The catch, of course, is that the crown is rumored to come with a curse—and it turns out to be a doozy. The resolution involves fighting, drinking, betrayal, and a bit of poetic justice.

As the second story opens, the knight has finally qualified for a big-money jousting tournament, after spending time in the "minor leagues" of jousts and tournaments that are held by local lords. The story becomes a mixture of mystery, fantasy and film-noir intrigue all blended with the standard jousting tournament stuff, as there are mysterious doings, crooked gamblers and beautiful ladies all interfering with the fair play of the tournament.

The book is short, less than 140 pages, and the pages themselves heavily illustrated, so it would be a good choice for a young reader who doesn't want a long book. It's much more serious than things like the *Dragonslayers' Academy* series, with violence and threats of violence, and some horrible things happening to at least one horse, so I would not recommend it for very young or very squeamish readers.

Reviewed by Nick Smith



Mythopoeic Society News

Mythlore 99/100

(vol. 26 nos. 1/2) Fall/Winter 2007

Table of Contents

- Editorial (Janet Brennan Croft)
- “Deep Lies the Sea-Longing”: Inklings of Home (Charles A. Huttar)
- The Centre of the Inklings: Lewis? Williams? Barfield? Tolkien? (Diana Pavlac Glycer)
- “Good, Not Safe”: Structure *vs.* Chaos in Narnia and the Writing Workshop (Ethan Campbell and Robert Jackson)
- *Letters to Malcolm* and the Trouble with Narnia: C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien and Their 1949 Crisis (Eric Seddon)
- Sacral Kingship: Aragorn as the Rightful and Sacrificial King in *The Lord of the Rings* (Karen Simpson Nikakis)
- Archaeology and the Sense of History in J.R.R. Tolkien’s Middle-earth (Deborah Sabo)
- The Enigma of Radagast: Revision, Melodrama and Depth (Nicholas Birns)
- Tolkien as a Child of *The Green Fairy Book* (Ruth Berman)
- Imitative Desire in Tolkien’s Mythology: A Girardian Perspective (Hayden Head)
- Maldon and Moria: On Byrhtnoth, Gandalf, and Heroism in *The Lord of the Rings* (Alexander M. Bruce)
- At Home and Abroad: Éowyn’s Two-fold Figuring as War Bride in *The Lord of the Rings* (Melissa Smith)
- Pagan Belief in *The Serpent’s Tooth* (Joe R. Christopher)
- Nazis, Mythology, and Totalitarian Minds in Kurt Vonnegut’s *Mother Night* (Gilbert McInnis)

Books Reviewed

Milton, Spenser, and the *Chronicles of Narnia: Literary Sources for C.S. Lewis’s Novels* by Elizabeth Baird Hardy; *C.S. Lewis: Life, Works, and Legacy*, edited by Bruce L. Edwards; *The Company They Keep: C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien as Writers in Community* by Diana Pavlac Glycer; and *Roots and Branches: Selected Papers on Tolkien* by Tom Shippey.

 MYTHOPOEIC PRESS

The Mythopoeic Press Announces its newest title, published in July 2007: *Past Watchful Dragons: Fantasy and Faith in the World of C.S. Lewis*, edited by Amy H. Sturgis. (ISBN 978-1887726115, tp, \$20.00)

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. Price of this book Check the Mythopoeic Press website for additional details and ordering information:



Activity Calendar

Marion VanLoo
Membership & Discussion Group Secretary

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Prospective Groups

CALIFORNIA

San Diego: LOTHLORIEN

Linda Sundstrom, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

FLORIDA

Tampa Bay: HOBBITON

Paul S. Ritz, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

North Central Florida: ERYN GALEN

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

INDIANA

Central Indiana: CERIN AMROTH

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

MISSOURI

St. Louis: THE KHAZAD

Gary & Sylvia Hunnewell, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

NORTH CAROLINA

Charlotte: THE CAROLINA TOLKIEN SOCIETY

Matt & Renita Peeler [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

OHIO

Akron

David Staley [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Web site: [REDACTED]

Chartered Groups

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles/Pasadena: MYDGARD

Lee Speth, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

September: *Dracula* by Bram Stoker

San Francisco Bay Area: KHAZAD-DÛM

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

Web: [REDACTED]

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

December: Annual Reading & Eating Meeting

COLORADO

Denver area: FANUIDHOL ("CLOUDY HEAD")

Patricia Yarrow, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Washington & Suburbs: KNOSSOS

Mimi Stevens, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

HAWAII

Oahu: SAMMATH NAUR

Steve Brown, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

September: *The Stolen Child* by Keith Donohue

October: *Fledgling* by Octavia Butler

November: *Stranger Things Happen* by Kelly Link

ILLINOIS

Peoria: THE FAR WESTFARTHING SMIAL

Mike Foster, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

November: *The Golden Compass* by Phillip Pullman

December: *American Gods* by Neil Gaiman

IOWA

Decorah: ALFHEIM

Doug Rossman, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

LOUISIANA

Baton Rouge: ROKE

Sally Budd, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

MICHIGAN

Ann Arbor area: GALADHREMMIN-ENNORATH

Dave & Grace Lovelace, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis-St. Paul: RIVENDELL

David Lenander, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

NEVADA

Reno: CRICKHOLLOW

Joanne Burnett, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

NEW YORK

New York: HEREN ISTARION

(THE NEW YORK TOLKIEN SOCIETY)

Anthony Burdge/Jessica Burke, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

OREGON

Mid-Willamette Valley Area

Donovan Mattole, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

Portland: BYWATER INKLINGS

Gary Lundquist, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

PENNSYLVANIA

Lancaster Area: C.S. LEWIS AND FRIENDS

Neil Gussman, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

SOUTH CAROLINA

Columbia: THE COLUMBIA C.S. LEWIS SOCIETY

Nina Fowler, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

WASHINGTON

Seattle: MITHLOND

Matthew Winslow, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

September: *The Lies of Locke Lamora* by Scott Lynch

October: *Anno Dracula* by Kim Newman

November: *Mr. Baggins* by John D. Rateliff

WISCONSIN

Milwaukee: THE BURRAHOBBITS

Jeffrey & Jan Long, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

October: *Ysabel* by Guy Gavriel Kay

Special Interest Group

THE ELVISH LINGUISTIC FELLOWSHIP

www.elvish.org. Newsletter: *Vinyar Tengwar*. Carl

Hostetter, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Journal: *Parma Eldalamberon*.

Christopher Gilson, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Correspondence Group

ONCE UPON A TIME (children's fantasy)

Laura Krentz, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Online Discussion Groups

MYTHSOC E-LIST

Society activities and general discussion. Sign up:

[REDACTED] or contact Joan

Marie Verba: [REDACTED]

COINHERENCE

Online discussion of Charles Williams

David Davis: E-mail: [REDACTED]

Book Reviews: Inklings

MATTHEW DICKERSON AND JONATHAN EVANS, *Ents, Elves, and Eriador: The Environmental Vision of J.R.R. Tolkien*. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2006. ISBN 0-8131-2418-2, hc, 316 pp., \$35.00.

You might not have thought that there was an entire book's worth of discussion to be had of Tolkien's view of the environment. You would be wrong. This is a solid and thoughtful book, intelligible and disciplined where Patrick Curry's *Defending Middle-earth* was diffuse and meandering, and wandered off into other subjects.

The first point to be gotten out of the way in any discussion of Tolkien and environmentalism (or Tolkien and war, for that matter, and Dickerson dealt with that in his earlier book *Following Gandalf*) is the presumption that Tolkien was a crusty old right-wing Tory, so why are pacifist tree-hugging hippies taking him up? Some have used this as evidence that the hippies are soft in the head.

Dickerson and Evans do not engage in straw-man bashing, but their entire book is a demonstration of the fallaciousness of that objection. Tolkien was no hippie; they make that clear. What he was, was a conservative in the best sense, loving the natural world and trying to preserve it. His declaration that he takes the part of trees against their enemies is key to his thinking. Possibly the greatest value of this book is the comparison of Tolkien's thought with the works of important environmentalist thinkers such as Wendell Berry and Aldo Leopold. There is deep compatibility to be found here.

This book is not, however, an environmentalist manifesto. It's a descriptive analysis of what Tolkien believed, and any moral declarations in it are all his.

The book is in three parts, with its center on the outside. The two framing sections, both drafted by Dickerson, concern broad issues. He describes the basic morality of the world as cre-

ation, as set forth in *The Silmarillion*, and deals with the tricky issue of stewardship, a word often used by Tolkien. Environmentalists tend to see "Christian stewardship" as a code phrase for resource plundering, but Dickerson shows that there is an environmentalist interpretation of the concept, and that Tolkien used it. At the end, Dickerson describes Tolkien's cautionary tales, of the ruined landscapes of Mordor, Isengard, and the Shire under Saruman, and he discusses some issues of contemporary applicability of Tolkien's principles. He also notes the limitations of Tolkien's vision. Middle-earth's natural depictions are almost entirely of plants; there are far fewer animals than such a landscape would naturally have. And those animals which do appear are often evil. It's easy to use Tolkien as a literary support for saving the trees, but you wouldn't cite him for saving the wolves.

The middle chapters, drafted by Evans, are more narrowly focused on the text of *The Lord of the Rings*. If Dickerson provides the broad vision, Evans provides a close analysis of the simple facts of hobbit agriculture, Elvish gardening, and Entish forestry. He also provides a chapter on margins, the transitions from one environment to another that are so important in *The Lord of the Rings*. When Frodo leaves the Shire, he leaves a settled civilization and goes into the wilderness. This shift, and the role of Bombadil in it, are the topics of this chapter.

While Dickerson is sweeping and commanding in his discussion of Tolkien, Evans seems more cautious and less sure of his command of material. For instance he notes that, since the Elves of Rivendell and Lorien supply food, there must be an agricultural industry that we do not see. True enough, but Evans has nothing to say about this. He does not appear to have read "Of Lembas" in *The Peoples of Middle-earth* which addresses this very issue, and he does not have

the confidence with which Henry Gee in *The Science of Middle-earth* shows that the Elves are masters of an unobtrusive high technology.

Aside from the opening chapter on *The Silmarillion*, and a short chapter by Dickerson on environmental issues in Tolkien's non-Middle-earth fiction (Giles of Ham may be a farmer, but his story doesn't have a lot to say about Christian stewardship of the land), this book is almost entirely about *The Lord of the Rings*. Even *The Hobbit* only comes in now and then. Dickerson and Evans could have written a richer book with a fuller knowledge of Tolkien's creative work, but their discussion of *The Lord of the Rings* as an environmentalist novel is full and convincing. On that basis this is well worth reading.

Reviewed by David Bratman



COLIN DURIEZ, *The C.S. Lewis Chronicles: The Indispensable Biography of the Creator of Narnia[.] Full of Little-Known Facts, Events and Miscellany*. With a foreword by Brian Sibley. New York: Blue Bridge (imprint of United Tribes Media), 2005. ISBN 0-9742405-8-3, hc, xiv + 306 pp., \$14.95.

Despite the subtitle's *Biography*, this is a chronology of Lewis's life, going through it year by year, with specific dates in each year. Duriez has kept the popular nature of his books by brief indications of the historical events of each year (including notable births and deaths) and by a frequent use of sidebars on a variety of topics, some trivial—meals in Narnia—and some useful—Lewis's list of the ten books that most influenced his "philosophy of life" (presumably excluding the Bible). (The list, which appeared in *The Christian Century*, is not dated nor given a citation in the Endnotes.)

This is not a scholarly chronology as is that done for Tolkien's life by Scull and Hammond in the first volume of their *J.R.R. Tolkien*

Companion and Guide. Duriez says in his preface that he has chosen "varied but representative days" (xiii). A problem with omissions arises. For one example out of many possible, Duriez lists the publication of *The Personal Heresy: A Controversy* (by Lewis and E.M.W. Tillyard) on 27 April 1939, but he does not list the public debate between Lewis and Tillyard that ended their series of articles. Another example: Duriez does not list Lewis's public reading of "The Queen of Drum" in the 1938 Summer Diversions at Oxford. (Scull and Hammond list Tolkien's reciting from memory "The Nun's Priest's Tale" at the same Summer Diversions, 3 August 1938.) But Duriez does list most of the obvious events and some interesting lesser ones (such as Warren H. Lewis's various military assignments.)

A few errors or dubious points appear. Shelley wrote *Prometheus Unbound*, not *Prometheus Bound* (62). Lewis's relationship with Janie Moore is played physically innocently—which at least needs a fuller discussion and is, anyway, incorrect (103). In a sidebar on "A Renaissance of Religious Writing" (*i.e.*, in the 1930s), Sayers's "Lord Peter Wimsey stories" are listed generally and Tolkien's *The Hobbit* is included (172). Lord Peter—said Sayers—was not a Christian, but one could list Sayers's *The Nine Tailors* under this topic. Joy Davidman is said to rent a house in Oxford (270); actually Lewis rented it for her—Duriez keeps Lewis's reputation safer in his phrasing. Duriez treats the Tuesday Bird-and-Baby meetings as Inklings meetings (*e.g.*, 244, 245); but W.H. Lewis did not use the term "Inklings" for anything but the Thursday evening meetings (and a few special get-togethers), and Humphrey Carpenter followed his usage. Duriez has on his side a number of people who want to claim they attended Inklings meetings after 20 October 1949; at the very least Duriez should have discussed the point more

clearly. (He is clear about the Thursday evening meetings stopping.) A number of other comments need better evidence, but the above are the ones that most bothered this reviewer.

Nevertheless, Duriez has produced a valuable book. The major use of such chronologies is to pin down dates. This Duriez does. An index with the book would have helped for finding citations admittedly; but for a book aimed at a popular audience, this is very well done. One can hope for a scholarly Lewisian chronology sometime—one thinks with a shudder of the letters to be listed as written on each day of Lewis's adulthood—but Duriez's volume will be valuable until then.

Reviewed by Joe R. Christopher



THOMAS HOWARD, *The Night Is Far Spent: A Treasury of Thomas Howard*, selected by Vivian W. Dubro. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2007. ISBN 978-1-58617-132-2, tp, 355 pp., \$16.95.

Ignatius Press—the one in San Francisco—has been recently releasing a number of Thomas Howard's books, including *The Novels of Charles Williams* (originally 1983 from Oxford University Press) and *Narnia and Beyond: A Guide to the Fiction of C.S. Lewis* (originally *The Achievement of C.S. Lewis* in 1980 from H. Shaw Publishers and revised in 1990 as *C.S. Lewis, Man of Letters: A Reading of His Fiction* from Ignatius). The latter—in this third version—has a new introduction by Howard, orienting it toward the emphasis on Narnia.

But Ignatius has also collected thirty-one essays by Howard in a new volume, *The Night Is Far Spent*. I say "essays" but one is an interview of Howard and a number are talks given at conferences. Of the true essays and the talks, four are of basic interest to The Mythopoeic Society. (Of

the other selections, some are on other literary topics, some are on religious topics, and some are miscellaneous.)

(1) "Of Towers and Wardrobes" (an address given at a conference at the University of Oxford, August 2004, pp. 25-38. Howard, in an aside, says that the title was given to him by the founders of the conference.) Howard spends much of the address talking about human figures in western art, suggesting a gradual decline in stature until one reaches the non-heroic, non-saintly, non-humane in Picasso and Braque. He briefly suggests a parallel decline in human depictions in literature. But, he suggests, Tolkien suddenly re-instated the heroic, the value-laden. Even more briefly Howard suggests that Lewis re-introduced traditional values in the Narnia books. (Most readers will agree that Tolkien and Lewis were not Absurdists of the 1950s, while still believing Howard's talk is very simplistic.)

(2) "C.S. Lewis and the Sanctified Imagination" (lecture at the C.S. Lewis Conference, Seattle Pacific University, June 1998), pp. 39-55. Howard spends much of his text on the meaning and/or implications of the term "sanctified imagination." Imagination he takes to be the image-making ability, which can be a way of approaching truth or ultimate reality. Sanctified he takes in an obvious religion sense, meaning something like holy. He combines them in suggesting the images of this world are just hints of the concreteness of spiritual reality. (This idea seems derived from Lewis, and ultimately from Plato, although Howard is not writing a scholarly paper of the sort that pins down indebtedness.) Howard's references to Lewis are mainly these: Bree is a Modernist in religion when he attempts to rationalize Aslan's attributes before meeting him; Lewis's poem "On Being Human" nicely contrasts human senses and angels' intellectual understanding; good examples of the sanctified imagination are (a) the old

priest in Glome who was not afraid of death (contrasted by Howard to the modernist Arnom whose statue of the goddess does not have the power of the black stone); (b) Ramandu the retired star; (c) the Utter East of The Dawn Treader's voyage; (d) the handing over of "the suzerainty" of Perelandra to Tor and Tinidril; (e) the coming of the god to Orual; (f) Jane Studdock's going to her husband at the end of *That Hideous Strength*. The final example has to do with Howard's emphasis on the incarnational nature of image-making and of the holy.

(3) "The Life and Legacy of C.S. Lewis" (a lecture given at the C.S. Lewis Foundation Conference, the University of Oxford, July 1998), pp. 56-73. A light-weight but pleasant overview of the titular topics. When Howard reaches the "legacy," he speaks of Lewis's writings: (a) the scholarly books (he quotes some passage about John Skelton from English Literature in the Sixteenth Century), (b) the "small books," as Howard calls them—which metamorph to include the longer apologetics (the basic idea is that *The Screwtape Letters*, *The Great Divorce*, *The Four Loves*, and others are not large tomes), and (c) the fiction—which includes the poems (Howard recommends "On Being Human," "Five Sonnets," and "The Late Passenger" from Poems, and he writes mainly of the characters in the fiction).

(4) "Light on Charles Williams" (an essay published in Touchstone, December 2004), pp. 125-133. Howard gives a background for Williams, mainly in terms of the Inklings. (On the basis of a comment by the publican at the Bird and Baby, he reports that it was mainly "Williams who rushed back and forth" getting drinks [125].) Howard claims, "after many years of study, I am absolutely convinced that [Williams] went to his grave never having [maritally] defrauded his wife." Later he suggests Williams's poems were written to his wife or per-

haps to a "supposititious?" woman. That Williams was physically unfaithful to his wife is doubtful, but that he was emotionally unfaithful is certain, as is the fact that he wrote poems to Phyllis Jones, among others—and Howard's study should have told him that by 2004. When Howard turns to the fiction (and slightly the Arthurian poetry), he briefly comments on the basic themes: "the theology of romantic love,' the Beatrician Vision, The City, The Empire, and the Index of the Body." On these he is good if brief; in connection with the first, Howard introduces the themes (or subthemes) of substitution, exchange, and co-inherence.

A brief addendum on another selection: "The Catholic Angler: An Interview with Thomas Howard by the Editors of Touchstone" (rpt. from Touchstone, September-October 1999), pp. 154-172. The first part covers Howard's agreement with Lewis's gender archetypes and the last gives Howard's C.S. Lewis reading list—the latter consists of twenty-one books. In addition to these passages, a few scattered references to Lewis and Tolkien appear in various essays, such as one paragraph on Lewis's comments on ritual (182).

This is hardly a significant book on Lewis, Tolkien, and/or Williams, but it is pleasant enough in its minor way. No index.

Reviewed by Joe R. Christopher



CHARLES WILLIAMS, *The Image of the City and Other Essays*. Introduction by Anne Ridler. Berkeley: Apocryphile Press, 2007 (original publication 1958). ISBN 1-933993-28-6, tp, 276 pp., \$18.95.

The "Image" explored in Charles Williams's republished collection of essays *The Image of the City* (1958) is that of the Christian City of God. The work provides insight into the writings of Charles Williams as well as some of the things

that influenced the Inklings. Just as J.R.R. Tolkien was immersed in Celtic and Norse Mythology, and C.S. Lewis in Christian Apologetics, Charles Williams found grounding in the tales of old and Christianity. Williams, like the other Inklings mentioned, sought inclusion in the City of God, and prepared himself intellectually. He also had a poetic streak.

Anne Ridler, a personal friend of Charles Williams, who selected the essays for this volume, chronicles in the part biographical introduction from 1958:

When Charles Williams died in 1945 there remained to us of his work, besides his published books and those which he had in preparation for the press, a number of essays which had appeared in periodicals and elsewhere, many of which contain important statements of his ideas. A selection of these is printed here.

Charles Williams left behind a rich literary and theological legacy, including novels, poetry, drama, criticism, theology, biography, editorial works, and articles. Ridler's long introduction (61 pages) with sections on his life, ideas and style, sets the stage for essays in the areas of literary history, theology, ethics, and Arthuriana, published under the groupings Literary Subjects, The Incarnation, The City, Pardon and Justice, Exchange and the Affirmative Way, and On The Arthurian Myth.

The secular, or those who have not read deeply in these areas, may find his dense essays, with all their references and tangents, hard to fully fathom. Williams was well versed in the Christian, Mythological and Literary Mega-texts which he sought to make a contribution to, but the reader may not be. Included are pieces about historical luminaries like Calvin and Shakespeare, as well as lesser known personages. Most interested readers are likely to find something of interest here, but not a great deal about the Inklings. The prose is also sometimes turgid and

re-reading may be required to fully understand some of the essays.

Rather than saying some of the included essays were good and others bad, it is more accurate to say different parties will appreciate different essays, depending upon their background. The section on the Arthurian Myths resonated most strongly with me having some knowledge of those myths, as would someone who had recently read Malory, T.H. White, Marion Zimmer Bradley, and/or followed the Arthurian movies in the modern cinema. Williams's essays bring the significance of the Arthurian characters to life. The essays on Milton are also insightful. There also are interesting references to the current events of Williams's time, with many of the included theological essays having been written during World War II.

Williams, a Christian wordsmith, sought to fulfill his role as a man in the service of god. As such, this rich collection of Williams essays will offer more to the Christian reader than to the secular reader. Williams is also presented here without a dark side. *Images of the City* can also serve a biographical function. For many who have read only Tolkien and Lewis, Charles Williams is an enigma. Apocryphile Press of Berkeley, which published this book, reminds us that Williams was not only a writer of gripping supernatural thrillers.

Images of the City is now back in print again with the same content that was originally published by Oxford University Press in 1958. There is unfortunately no new index or foreword included in the work.

Reviewed by Ryder W. Miller



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.

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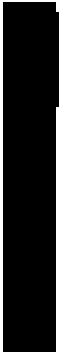


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Marion VanLoo



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