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Additional Keywords
Bonnie (Bergstrom) GoodKnight
After Tolkien, Lewis, and Williams, Owen Barfield is the fourth best known member of the Inklings. He was a life-long best friend of C.S. Lewis, who vaged "the Great War" with him on philosophical matters. This is covered by Humphrey Carpenter's book The Inklings. Admirers of C.S. Lewis might make the mistake of viewing Barfield's importance primarily as Lewis' friend and not considering his importance in his own right — as writer and philosopher. A very good introduction can be found in Romantic Religion: A Study of Barfield, Lewis, Williams, and Tolkien by R.J. Reilly.

Nicholls explains in his "Introduction" that these essays were read at an Institute of Contemporary Arts in London, between January and March, 1975 (with one exception, when the speaker became ill and could not deliver the paper). There are eleven essays, seven by science-fiction (or fantasy) writers, four by respectable names in other fields (such as Alvin Toffler, author of Future Shock). Three of the essays mention Lewis or Tolkien:

(a) Ursula K. Le Guin, "Science Fiction and Mrs Brown", pp. 13-33 [Tolkien, 20-21]. Le Guin writes one of the better essays, discussing characterization in science fiction and using Virginia Woolf's "Mr Bennett and Mrs Brown" as her starting point. She uses The Lord of the Rings as an example of characterization in fantasy "...as traditional myths and folktales break the complex conscious daylight personality down into its archetypal unconscious dreaming components... so Tolkien... broke Frodo into four: Frodo, Sam, Gollum, and himself. By counting Bilbo, Gollum is probably the best character in the book because he has two of the components, Gollum and Gollum. Frodo himself is only a quarter or a fifth of himself. Yet even so he is something new to fantasy: a vulnerable, limited, rather unpredictable hero, who finally falls at his own quest... and has to have it accomplished for

him by his mortal Eeny, Gollum, who is, however, his kinman, his brother, in fact himself. [Moreover, Frodo] has to go on, leave home, make the voyage out, in fact die—something fantasy heroes never do, and allegories are incapable of doing" (p. 21).

(b) Alan Garner, "Inner Time", pp. 119-138 [Lewis, 132]. Garner writes a very personal essay, about his nervous problems and their solutions. He describes the relief and new energy gained from the removal of a psychological blockage in these terms, in addition to the more personal ones: "The involvement of an academically-trained Western mind with a primitive catastrophic process (that is, the waking experience of Algira, Dream-time, the Illud Tempus of anthropology) is not always pleasant, but it is never far from what C.S. Lewis calls 'Joy', and I would have it no other way" (pp. 132).

(c) Peter Nicholls, "Science Fiction: The Monsters and the Critics", pp. 157-183 [Tolkien, 159-160]. Nicholls points out his adaptation of the title of Tolkien's essay "Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics", but the rest of Nicholls' essay does not make a point analogous to Tolkien's—the monsters are not the bug-eyed monsters and other aliens of science fiction but the monstrous aspects of the SF field itself: The Sentimental Stylist, The Blurb Writer, The Insufficiently Monstrous Alien, The Monster of Anarchy (actually a discussion of the methods of depicting anarchy), and The Monster of Fulfilled Promise (the writer who repeats himself). The types of critics receive equally cute titles.