



Mythopoeic Society

mythLORE

A Journal of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis,
Charles Williams, and Mythopoeic Literature

Volume 37
Number 2

Article 11

Spring 4-17-2019

In Memoriam: Nancy-Lou Patterson

Janet Brennan Croft

Rutgers University - New Brunswick/Piscataway

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/mythlore>



Part of the [Children's and Young Adult Literature Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Croft, Janet Brennan (2019) "In Memoriam: Nancy-Lou Patterson," *Mythlore: A Journal of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams, and Mythopoeic Literature*: Vol. 37: No. 2, Article 11.

Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/mythlore/vol37/iss2/11>

This Note is brought to you for free and open access by the Mythopoeic Society at SWOSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Mythlore: A Journal of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams, and Mythopoeic Literature by an authorized editor of SWOSU Digital Commons. An ADA compliant document is available upon request. For more information, please contact phillip.fitzsimmons@swosu.edu.

To join the Mythopoeic Society go to:
<http://www.mythsoc.org/join.htm>

SWOSUTM

Online Summer Seminar 2023

August 5-6, 2023: Fantasy Goes to Hell: Depictions of Hell in Modern Fantasy Texts

<https://mythsoc.org/oms/oms-2023.htm>



In Memoriam: Nancy-Lou Patterson

Additional Keywords

Nancy-Lou Patterson, Memoriam

IN MEMORIAM: NANCY-LOU PATTERSON

JANET BRENNAN CROFT

NANCY-LOU PATTERSON, SCHOLAR, ARTIST, POET, AND TEACHER, was an essential figure in the history of both *Mythlore* and the Mythopoeic Society. Born in 1929 in Worcester, Massachusetts to academic parents, she and her husband eventually settled in Waterloo, Ontario in 1962, and within six years she had founded the Department of Fine Arts at the University of Waterloo. In 1993, upon her retirement, she became the university's first woman to be named Distinguished Professor Emerita. She worked in textiles, stained glass, wood, metal, ceramics, and calligraphy, and her fine-line pen and ink drawings frequently graced the covers and interior of *Mythlore* and illustrated her many articles. In addition to her extensive publications on the Inklings, she also wrote about Inuit and First Nations art and the arts and crafts of Swiss and German immigrants to Waterloo County, and authored fiction and poetry as well.

Patterson passed away in October 2018, fifteen years after being diagnosed with Alzheimer's, and is survived by her husband Palmer and eight of the nine children (six of them adopted) they raised together. Her family kindly granted us permission to publish one of her final poems, rendered all the more poignant by the misspelling of the name of her disease and the simplicity of its language.

On Being Diagnosed With Alzheimer's

Of course, I knew
I'd die, someday,
but not like this.

The doctor smiles;
he's counting out
his list of pills,

prescribing the
long, slow loss
of my known self,

reminding me
of Sandburg's fog;
its small cat feet.

Nancy-Lou Patterson, 2003

While Patterson does not hold the record for the most articles published in *Mythlore* and other society publications (that honor belongs to Joe R. Christopher and is still climbing and unlikely to ever be beaten), she was one of our most prolific contributors, beginning with a paper in the *Proceedings* of the very first Mythcon in 1969 and continuing through her last review published in *Mythlore* #88 in 2001. Her essays were distinguished by clarity of style, breadth of reference, and insightful analysis. In addition to reviewing well over 200 titles for *Mythlore* (and a number for *Mythprint* as well), she served as Book Review Editor for issues #26-84, 1981-1998 and member of the Editorial Board for issues #58-84, 1989-1998, and was the Keynote Speaker at Mythcon 13 in 1982.

Patterson's papers, including the poem reproduced above, are held in the special collections at the University of Waterloo, and a finding aid is available at <https://uwaterloo.ca/library/special-collections-archives/collections/patterson-nancy-lou-fonds>. I have been working with Emily E. Auger to collect Patterson's Inklings and fantasy scholarship from *Mythlore* and other sources (including some previously unpublished essays as well as many from sources now difficult to find) into a series of volumes. So far we have published the following, and plan one or two more volumes to cover her non-Inklings papers and fantasy art. They can be ordered via Amazon, Lulu.com (for the first three), or Kobo.com (for the Williams volume) in paper or electronic format.

- *Ransoming the Waste Land: Papers on C.S. Lewis's Space Trilogy, Chronicles of Narnia, and Other Works*. 2 vols. Valleyhome Books, 2016.
- *Detecting Wimsey: Papers on Dorothy L. Sayers's Detective Fiction*. Valleyhome Books, 2017.
- *Nancy-Lou Patterson Reviews Books by and About Dorothy L. Sayers, C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, Charles Williams, and Others*. Valleyhome Books, 2018.
- *Divining Tarot: Papers on Charles Williams's The Greater Trumps and Other Works*. Valleyhome Books, 2019.

Nancy-Lou Patterson was an exemplar of the life well-lived and fully engaged, as a scholar, artist, writer, wife and mother, and active member of her community and church. "Being creative is who I am. It is everything. It is what I am about," she said of herself. I am grateful that *Mythlore* and the Mythopoeic Society were beneficiaries of her intelligent and creative spirit.

For local obituaries, search the news and notices of *The Waterloo Region Record* at <https://www.therecord.com/> and read the remembrances of a colleague at the University of Waterloo at <https://uwaterloo.ca/fine-arts/news/remembering-nancy-lou-patterson-1929-2018>.

Articles in *Mythlore* and other Society publications:

- “‘All Nerves and Nose’: Lord Peter Wimsey as Wounded Healer in the Novels of Dorothy L. Sayers.” *Mythlore* 14.4 (#54) (1988): 13–16. (Reprinted in *Detecting Wimsey*)
- “Always Winter and Never Christmas: Symbols of Time in Lewis’ Chronicles of Narnia.” *Mythlore* 18.1 (#67) (1991): 10–14. (Reprinted in *Ransoming the Waste Land* vol.2)
- “An Appreciation of Pauline Baynes.” *Mythlore* 7.3 (#25) (1980): 3–5.
- “Anti-Babels: Images of the Divine Center in *That Hideous Strength*.” *Mythcon II, Francisco Torres, Santa Barbara, CA, 1971*. Ed. Glen GoodKnight. Los Angeles: Mythopoeic Society, 1971. 6–11. (Reprinted in *Ransoming the Waste Land* vol.1 as part of “Archetypes of the Feminine in *That Hideous Strength*”)
- “Archetypes of the Mother in the Fantasies of George MacDonald.” *Mythcon I, Harvey Mudd College, Claremont, CA, 1970*. Ed. Glen GoodKnight. Los Angeles: Mythopoeic Society, 1970. 14–20.
- “Banquet at Belbury: Festival and Horror in *That Hideous Strength*.” *Mythlore* 8.3 (#29) (1981): 7–14. (Reprinted in *Ransoming the Waste Land* vol.1)
- “Beneath That Ancient Roof: The House as Symbol in Dorothy L. Sayers’ *Busman’s Honeymoon*.” *Mythlore* 10.3 (#37) (1984): 39–46. (Reprinted in *Detecting Wimsey*)
- “‘A Bloomsbury Blue-Stocking’: Dorothy L. Sayers’ Bloomsbury Years in Their ‘Spatial and Temporal Content [sic].’” *Mythlore* 19.3 (#73) (1993): 6–15. (Reprinted in *Detecting Wimsey*)
- “The Bolt of Tash: The Figure of Satan in C.S. Lewis’ *The Horse and His Boy* and *The Last Battle*.” *Mythlore* 16.4 (#62) (1990): 23–26. (Reprinted in *Ransoming the Waste Land* vol.2)
- “Bright-Eyed Beauty: Celtic Elements in Charles Williams, J.R.R. Tolkien, and C.S. Lewis.” *Mythlore* 10.1 (#35) (1983): 5–10.
- “A Comedy of Masks: Lord Peter as Harlequin in *Murder Must Advertise*.” *Mythlore* 15.3 (#57) (1989): 22–28. (Reprinted in *Detecting Wimsey*)
- “*Guardaci Ben*: The Visionary Woman in C.S. Lewis’ Chronicles of Narnia and *That Hideous Strength*.” [Part 1]. *Mythlore* 6.3 (#21) (1979): 6–10. (Reprinted in *Ransoming the Waste Land* vol.1)
- “*Guardaci Ben*: The Visionary Woman in C.S. Lewis’ Chronicles of Narnia and *That Hideous Strength*.” [Part 2]. *Mythlore* 6.4 (#22) (1979): 20–24. (Reprinted in *Ransoming the Waste Land* vol.1)
- “Halfe Like a Serpent: The Green Witch in *The Silver Chair*.” *Mythlore* 11.2 (#40) (1984): 37–47. (Reprinted in *Ransoming the Waste Land* vol.2)
- “The Holy House of Ungit.” *Mythlore* 21.4 (#82) (1997): 4–15. (Reprinted in *Ransoming the Waste Land* vol.2)
- “*Homo Monstrosus*: Lloyd Alexander’s Gurgi and the Shadow Figures of Fantastic Literature.” *Mythlore* 3.3 (#11) (1976)/*Tolkien Journal* #18 (1976): 24–28.
- “The Host of Heaven: Astrological and Other Images of Divinity in the Fantasies of C.S. Lewis.” [Part 1]. *Mythlore* 7.3 (#25) (1980): 19–24, 26–29. (Reprinted in *Ransoming the Waste Land* vol.1)
- “The Host of Heaven: Astrological and Other Images of Divinity in the Fantasies of C.S. Lewis.” [Part 2]. *Mythlore* 7.4 (#26) (1981): 13–21. (Reprinted in *Ransoming the Waste Land* vol.1)

- "The Jewels of Messias: Images of Judaism and Antisemitism in the Novels of Charles Williams." *Mythlore* 6.2 (#20) (1979): 27–31. (Reprinted in *Divining Tarot*)
- "Letters from Hell: The Symbolism of Evil in *The Screwtape Letters*." *Mythlore* 12.1 (#43) (1985): 47–57. (Reprinted in *Ransoming the Waste Land* vol.2)
- "Lord of the Beasts: Animal Archetypes in C.S. Lewis." *Narnia Conference, Palms Park, West Los Angeles, 1969*. Ed. Glen GoodKnight. Los Angeles: Mythopoeic Society, 1970. 24–32. (Reprinted in *Ransoming the Waste Land* vol.2)
- "'Miraculous Bread . . . Miraculous Wine': Eucharistic Motifs in the Fantasies of C.S. Lewis." *Mythlore* 22.2 (#84) (1998): 28, 30–46. (Reprinted in *Ransoming the Waste Land* vol.1)
- "Narnia and the North: The Symbolism of Northernness in the Fantasies of C.S. Lewis." *Mythlore* 4.2 (#14) (1976): 9–16. (Reprinted in *Ransoming the Waste Land* vol.2)
- "A Ring of Good Bells: Providence and Judgement in Dorothy L. Sayers' *The Nine Tailors*." 16.1 (#59) (1989): 50–52. (Reprinted in *Detecting Wimsey*)
- "'Some Kind of Company': The Sacred Community in *That Hideous Strength*." *Mythlore* 13.1 (#47) (1986): 8–19. (Reprinted in *Ransoming the Waste Land* vol.1)
- "The Triumph of Love: Interpretations of the Tarot in Charles Williams' *The Greater Trumps*." *Mythcon III, Regency Hyatt House, Long Beach, CA, 1972*. Ed. Glen GoodKnight. Los Angeles: Mythopoeic Society, 1974. 12–32. (Reprinted in *Divining Tarot*)
- "Why We Honor the Centenary of Dorothy L. Sayers (1893–1957)." *Mythlore* 19.3 (#73) (1993): 4–5. (Reprinted in *Detecting Wimsey*)

Mythlore front and back cover art

- "Straight as a Pillar She Stood." (From *The Princess and Curdie*.) Front cover, *Mythlore* 6.3 (#21) (1979).
- From *That Hideous Strength*. Front cover, *Mythlore* 12.3 (#45) (1986).
- "St. Anne's." (From *That Hideous Strength*.) Front cover, *Mythlore* 13.3 (#49) (1987).
- "The Son of Lancelot." (From *Taliessen Through Logres*.) Front cover, *Mythlore* 15.1 (#55) (1988).
- "The Destruction of Edgestow." (From *That Hideous Strength*.) Front cover, *Mythlore* 16.2 (#60) (1989).
- "Bacchus and All his Wild Girls." (From *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.) Back cover, *Mythlore* 18.1 (#67) (1991). (Reproduced on the facing page.)
- "Lucy of Narnia." (From *The Chronicles of Narnia*.) Back cover, *Mythlore* 18.4 (#70) (1992).
- "The Dorothy L. Sayers Centenary." Front cover, *Mythlore* 19.2 (#73) (1993).
- "The Holy House of Ungit." (From *Till We Have Faces*.) Front cover, *Mythlore* 21.4 (#82) (1997).



BACCHUS AND ALL HIS WILD GIRLS

"I WOULDN'T HAVE FELT VERY SAFE WITH



IF WE'D MET THEM WITHOUT ASIAN." ♪ YOMI

"I SHOULD THINK NOT," SAID