



Mythopoeic Society

mythLORE

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Charles Williams, and Mythopoeic Literature

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## Editorial Philosophy

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## 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>



## Editorial Philosophy

involvement with the Society, if indeed they would put it this way, is solely as a reader of this journal. Attending the annual Mythopoeic Conference, volunteering as a member of the Mythopoeic Fantasy and Scholarship Awards committees, organizing or participating in an affiliated Discussion Group, or considering writing an article, review, letter of comment, or doing artwork for *Mythlore*, among other things, are to be done by "others." I really don't think the Society could presently handle it, if every member did participate in all of these things, except perhaps for the Mythopoeic Conferences. No one should feel obligated to participate in any of these things; it is a matter of individual choice whether one takes part or not. What I am wondering about is what percentage of the readers see the Society as an organization with a variety of things presented for their participation, in other words, a member-oriented Society, and what percentage feel their reading of *Mythlore* as their sole connection with the Society, which is merely the originating source of the journal. I am wondering this in print because whenever a *Mythlore* Questionnaire or a Society ballot is sent out to the readers, the most response we have ever had back has been less than 30%. Perhaps this is typical and normal. I do not have the data on response rates for other organizationally generated publications to make a comparison. Both I as Editor of *Mythlore* and the Founder of the Mythopoeic Society, and the other ten members of the Council of Stewards, direct the Society as a member-oriented organization, offering a variety of activities, and I believe we are correct in doing so. In your opinion, is this the right approach? We spend a great deal of time and Society funds pursuing this outlook. Is this meaningful to you, or should we be operating from a different approach, such as focusing more on the aspect or aspects where the majority do show interest? What is your thinking? We strive to do our best, but constantly need input. I am gratified that the vast majority of *Mythlore* subscribers do renew, proving that this journal is of value and interest to you. That show of support for the unique blend of interests and purpose *Mythlore* represents is personally very appreciated.

### Editorial Philosophy

I would like to take the opportunity to comment here on what I believe is the proper role of an Editor. This journal should not be, and is not, a vehicle solely for view points and interpretations agreeable to the Editor. If I were to print only articles, reviews, columns, letters, and artwork that first matched 100% my own taste and viewpoint, then *Mythlore* would print very little indeed! A good Editor will take the best material available, and present it the best way possible. Regarding written material I feel if they are well written, making their points in a creditably supported way, with their facts straight, making a contribution to their field, and written in a clear readable style, then they should be published. One of the main reasons for the letter column is to provide opportunity for readers' reaction, to agree, to make distinctions, or to disagree — mildly or otherwise. I welcome and encourage this reaction. No one should make the mistaken assumption that all material precisely represents this journal's editorial philosophy or speaks for the Mythopoeic Society. One reader observed on the last Questionnaire that the majority of articles are written from either a Christian or Jungian viewpoint. That may be true, as far as it goes, but it should not be casually assumed that such material is given preference over those with other viewpoints. Some material in this issue demonstrates otherwise. Christianity in

the works of Tolkien, Lewis, and Williams is integral to their full study and consideration, and while this is a sensitive area to some, to ignore or sidestep this would be intellectually dishonest. While I do not totally agree with the body of work by the psychologist C.G. Jung, the applicability of his approach and insights to the study of mythic writers is amazingly valid and revealing in a number of ways. It is not surprising that many others are familiar with Jung, and apply his insights to their articles. I would recommend the reading of Jung to those who are not familiar with him, especially *Memories, Dreams and Reflections* (as an introduction) and *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*. There is very little direct solicitation of articles, because I have learned years ago that good articles cannot be assigned. They are voluntarily produced out of the desire and inspiration of the writer. Given this, we do encourage submissions, and present the best available. I mention all this to clarify what is this Editor's operating philosophy.

### We are Indexed . . .

*Mythlore* is indexed in the *Modern Languages Association International Bibliography*, the *American Humanities Index*, the *Arts and Humanities Citation Index*, *Abstracts of English Studies*, *Current Contents*, and the *Science Fiction and Fantasy Research Index*. Most recently it has published a Subject Index of its first 50 issues, found in issue 51.

## Mythopoeic Core Reading List

*Mythlore* frequently publishes articles that presuppose the reader is already familiar with the works they discuss. This is natural, given the special nature of *Mythlore*. In order to assist some readers, the following is what might be considered a "core" mythopoeic reading list, containing the most well known and discussed works. Due to the many editions printed, only the title and original date of publication are given. Good reading!

#### J.R.R. Tolkien

*The Hobbit* (1937); "Leaf by Niggle" (1945); "On Fairy-Stories" (1945); *The Lord of the Rings*: Vol. 1, *The Fellowship of the Ring* (1954); Vol. II, *The Two Towers* (1954); Vol. III, *The Return of the King* (1955); *The Silmarillion* (1977); *Unfinished Tales* (1980).

#### C.S. Lewis

*Out of the Silent Planet* (1938); *Perelandra* (1943); *The Hideos Strength* (1945); *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (1950); *Prince Caspian* (1951); *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (1952); *The Silver Chair* (1953); *The Horse and His Boy* (1954); *The Magician's Nephew* (1955); *The Last Battle* (1956); *Till We Have Faces* (1956).

#### Charles Williams

*War in Heaven* (1930); *Many Dimensions* (1931); *The Place of the Lion* (1931); *The Greater Trumps* (1932); *Shadows of Ecstasy* (1933); *Descent into Hell* (1937); *All Hallow's Eve* (1945); *Taliessin through Logres* (1938); and *The Region of the Summer Stars* (1944) (printed together in 1954).