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Editorial

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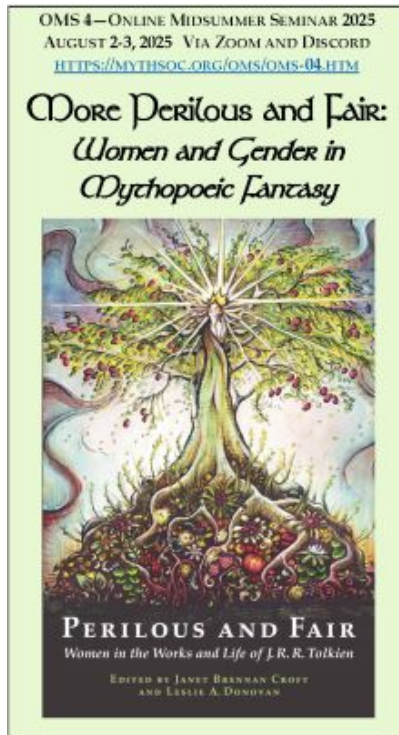
Online MidSummer Seminar 2025

More Perilous and Fair: Women and Gender in Mythopoeic Fantasy

August 2-5, 2024

Via Zoom and Discord

<https://www.mythsoc.org/oms/oms-04.htm>



Editorial

Abstract

This is our largest issue of *Mythlore* to date; in fact, at 288 pages, we have reached the limit at which we can keep our postage rates at their current level, so you won't ever see a larger issue under our current subscription model.

Additional Keywords

Mythlore; Editorial

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EDITORIAL

THIS IS OUR LARGEST ISSUE OF *MYTHLORE* to date; in fact, at 288 pages, we have reached the limit at which we can keep our postage rates at their current level, so you won't ever see a larger issue under our current subscription model.

Why so big? As many other editors of scholarly journals in the humanities have noted, after an initial drop during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, submissions are way up. There's simply more great material coming in—and with our two recent Special Issues (#135 on Mythopoeic Children's Literature, #138 on Ursula K. Le Guin), we had a back-log of general material waiting. So settle in for some great reading!

Our first three papers work together as a sequence on patterns of nature-related imagery in fantasy. Sofia Parrila's "All Worthy Things" was the winner of the Alexei Kondratiev Award for the best student paper at Mythcon this year, and explores the personhood of nature as a quasi-self-aware agent in Tolkien's works. Norbert Schürer dives deeper into water imagery and its meaning in *The Lord of the Rings*. And Trenton McNulty plunges below the surface of water (and a series of other reflective surfaces) in the Harry Potter books.

We segue to the watery world of *Piranesi* in Julie M. Dugger's paper, which leads off a group of essays on fantasists outside of the Inklings. Dennis Wilson Wise attempts a reassessment of Piers Anthony's problematic *A Spell for Chameleon*, Anna Köhler tracks parallels and divergences between series by Terry Pratchett and Jonathan Stroud, and Gabriel Mamola explores the moral code of Solomon Kane, one of Robert E. Howard's less-familiar heroes.

Returning to the Inklings, Mattie E. Gustafson traces the influence of Biblical wisdom literature on *The Lord of the Rings*. Joseph Thompson analyzes Charles Williams's poem "Taliessin in the Rose-Garden" (Thompson will examine Williams's Merlin character in the Spring 2022 issue). We close the essay section with two papers on Tolkien and linguistic topics: Thomas Honegger on the mysterious non-existence of "Hobbitic," and John R. Holmes on Tolkien's talk at the Oxford Dante Society.

The Notes and Letters section is also particularly extensive this issue. Donald T. Williams responds to Verlyn Flieger's important recent essay interpreting Tolkien's internal contradictions as the keystone to the arch of his creative and scholarly work; in turn, Robin Reid will respond to Williams in the spring 2022 issue. Reginald Weems discovers inspirations for Cair Paravel in the scenes of C.S. Lewis's childhood holidays. Song Cho briefly calls our attention to parallels between Lewis's *Screwtape Letters* and Jane Austen's posthumously published *Lady Susan*. And Emily E. Auger's review essay on several recent volumes about women tarot artists leads into a review section featuring a tempting array of recent publications of interest.

Edmund R. (Ed) Meškys (1936-2021) was very active in science fiction fandom and a familiar sight at conferences with his guide dogs after he lost his sight in 1971. Ed was the second Thain (president) of the Tolkien Society of America and sponsored the first U.S. Tolkien conference at Belknap College in New Hampshire in 1968. In 1972 the TSA merged with the Mythopoeic Society, and Ed was the Mythcon Guest of Honor in 1975. He edited the well-known Hugo-winning fanzine *Niekas*, as well as *Tolkien Journal*, which was absorbed into *Mythlore* in 1976, and several other publications. All fifteen issues of *Tolkien Journal* are now available on the SWOSU platform along with other Mythopoeic Society publications. File770.com published an obituary with more details on 26 July 2021.

Paul Nolan Hyde (1942-2021) was a linguistics professor at Brigham Young University and wrote *Mythlore's* Quenti Lambardillion column on Tolkien's languages, which ran in nearly every issue from 1982 (#33) through 1992 (#69). He was the Philology Editor for issues #33-78 (1982-1995) and Submissions Editor for #79-84 (1995-1998), and contributed to *Vinyar Tengwar* as well. Read an obituary at sundbergolpinmortality.com/obituary/Paul-Hyde.¹

We are operating on the optimistic assumption that we will be able to gather in person once again in time for Mythcon 52 in the summer of 2022. But in the meantime, we are kicking off a new series of online winter seminars on February 4–5, 2022, with “The Inklings and Horror: Fantasy’s Dark Corners.” Please see the ad on page 240 for more details and the call for papers, or visit <https://mythsoc.org/mythcon/ows-2022.htm>.

The Mythopoeic Society is in urgent need of a Subscription Manager to pick up the reins when the wonderful Marion VanLoo retires at the end of this year. Please see the ad on page 208, or contact me at mythlore@mythsoc.org for more details.

If you would like to keep up with news relating to *Mythlore*, please follow us on Facebook, where we post advance notice of items accepted for upcoming issues, lists of items available for review, and so forth. In addition to the members of the *Mythlore* Editorial Advisory Board, the Mythopoeic Society Council of Stewards, and our ever-dependable referees, I'd also like to express my continuing gratitude to Phillip Fitzsimmons, Reference and Digitization Librarian at Southwestern Oklahoma State University Libraries and our Administrator for *Mythlore* and Society Archives, who has been directing the team adding archival content to <http://dc.swosu.edu/mythlore/>, and to his assistant Ben Dressler. My thanks also to David L. Emerson for moral support, eagle-eyed proofreading, and keeping the editor properly caffeinated.

—Janet Brennan Croft

¹ Hyde's appreciation of Tolkien from the viewpoint of an observant member of the Church of Latter-day Saints at the time of the release of the first Peter Jackson movie is well worth reading: <https://rsc.byu.edu/vol-3-no-3-2002/moral-mythmaker-creative-theology-j-r-r-tolkien>.