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***Adapting Tolkien: Proceedings of The Tolkien Society Seminar 2020*, edited by Will Sherwood**

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Adapting Tolkien: Proceedings of The Tolkien Society Seminar 2020, edited by Will Sherwood

Abstract

A review of *Adapting Tolkien: Proceedings of The Tolkien Society Seminar 2020*, considering the individual contributions which make up this volume.

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specifically *male* violence against women. For instance, Ramsby seems to overlook how the women in the British Men of Letters torture Sam in a very cold manner. Although Ramsby quotes Virginia Woolf as saying that to “fight has always been the man’s habit, not the woman’s” (157), she seems to ignore how television drama is becoming ubiquitously more violent, and the line between male and female violence is no longer clear.

Overall, though, *Death in Supernatural: Critical Essays* is an interesting volume whose strongest essays will certainly appeal to academics and fans alike. Appearing in 2019, the book only covers the show’s first thirteen seasons, but many of the arguments made here still apply through the final season’s finale. While the series is overwhelmingly secular, it draws on major religious themes from the Judeo-Christian tradition—especially on Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven. Examining many of these elements, *Death in Supernatural* suggests that the show uses death to give us a better way to make peace with the inevitable and tells us, as Taylor notes, that “pain of all kinds is integral in shaping who we are” (201). The authors of the volume see *Supernatural* as demonstrating that living with grief and death is not only possible but unavoidable. With its engaging and thought-provoking analysis, the book offers a valuable contribution to the growing body of scholarship on *Supernatural*. While the book is mostly academic, the authors’ analysis will be of great interest not only to popular culture and television studies scholars but also to fans of the show who wish to deepen their understanding of its rich and multi-layered world. Ultimately, *Supernatural* deserves more collections like this one by Taylor and Nylander.

—Martina G. Wise



ADAPTING TOLKIEN: PROCEEDINGS OF THE TOLKIEN SOCIETY SEMINAR 2020, edited by Will Sherwood. Edinburgh: Luna Press Publishing, 2021. xii, 149 pp. ISBN 9781913387693. \$18.99.

While Tolkien’s mixed views on adaptation are well known, this collection harnesses the range of approaches towards altering, modifying, reshaping, and transforming Tolkien’s work. *Adapting Tolkien: Proceedings of the Tolkien Society Seminar 2020*, edited by Will Sherwood, includes six contributions ranging from illustration, film, language, music, and even naming features in space. The range of articles featured in this volume will attract a broad spectrum of interests, though some hold more firmly to the concept of adapting Tolkien than others.

The first contribution, from Cami D. Agan, considers Christopher Tolkien's contribution to the legendarium. With especial consideration for his organization, adaptation, and editing of the First Age materials, Agan praises Christopher's work and channels this towards considering the Elder Days "both non-diegetically and diegetically" (18). This invites us to consider how the characters within Middle-earth also contribute to the shaping and adaptation of the tales of the First Age. Readers with an interest in world-creation and the relationship between Middle-earth characters and Tolkien authors and editors will gravitate towards this article.

"The other illustrated *Silmarillion*: Francis Mosley for the Folio Society" follows this. Bretangnolle investigates Mosley's illustrated *Silmarillion*, covering the origin of the edition, Mosley's style, creating the illustrations, and artistic choices. This work highlights the Folio Society's commitment to Tolkien's vision and views on illustration, which resulted in a book in which illustrations and text were complementary and symbiotic. Bretangnolle draws attention to the real challenges facing Mosley while reflecting that his flexibility and creativity produced illustrations that Tolkien himself "would have liked" (34). Ultimately, this contribution revolves around the relationship between an author's intentions and opinions and the interpretation of their texts.

The adaptation of the Elvish language is the focus of the third entry in this volume. Dr. Andrew Higgins discusses the necessity of addressing the languages Tolkien created for Middle-earth in adaptation. Higgins considers the construction of Elvish for the Jackson films and the impact the inclusion of these languages creates. Focusing in on the work of David Salo as the "translator" for Jackson's production, the author explores the process of translating English into Elvish using two key methodologies (conflation and reconstruction). With regards to the impact of including Elvish, Higgins posits the desire to create "a sense of strangeness" (54) as well as using the films as a vehicle for people to get a sense of Tolkien's languages. This engaging paper offers us a view of adaptation between mediums as well as outlining why such an adaptation is valuable.

Brian Egede-Pedersen then explores adapting Tolkien through music, specifically heavy metal. This perhaps less familiar medium of adaptation is invigorated by Egede-Pedersen, who points out that, while at first heavy metal may not seem like a natural environment for Tolkien, the musical genre does in fact synergize with the darker themes, characters, and settings in Middle-earth. By analyzing songs from the band Battlelore, this paper demonstrates the knowledge the musicians had of Tolkien's legendarium as well as highlighting the interpretive space Tolkien left us with lyrics from a range of silent groups, such as the Corsairs. The employment of "the enchanted zone" (70) is also discussed at length. "I Heard the Sword's Song, and it Sang to Me': Adapting

Tolkien in the World of Heavy Metal” certainly sheds light on a form of adaptation many readers may be unfamiliar with and is an interesting addition to this volume.

Penultimately, “Is Adapting Tolkien (Mis)Remembering Tolkien?” by Mina D. Luki investigates attitudes towards adaptation. The relationship between memory and adaptation shapes Luki’s line of thought, taking Jackson’s film trilogy as the adaptation in question. The author presents the range of responses to their research surveys to demonstrate the variety of opinions towards adaptations and modifications in Jackson’s trilogies. The discussion of canon, fandom, and collective memory extends the implications of Luki’s evidence and forms an interesting and well-rounded contribution to this volume. Readers keen to explore the factors involved in forming views towards adaptation will find this particularly valuable.

The final contribution is from Kristine Larsen, “Adapting Tolkien Beyond Arda, or, How to Navigate the Political Minefield of the International Astronomical Union in Order to Name Features on Titan, Pluto, and Charon After Middle-earth.” This article is built on the importance of names to and within Tolkien; it weaves this concept of names into a discussion of astronomical naming (particularly the politics of this) and concludes by considering the naming of features on Pluto and Charon. Larsen’s work is thorough and evidently well researched; however, I might suggest adherence to the general theme of adaptation is more subtle than in other contributions; application might be the word that comes to mind more readily, given the discussion of naming astrological features and rationalizing this by linking names to themes, characters, or settings in Tolkien. But this does not undermine the interest and value of Larsen’s work, and it concludes the volume on a stimulating and engaging note.

—Alana White



EAST OF THE WARDROBE: THE UNEXPECTED WORLDS OF C.S. LEWIS.
Warwick Ball. New York: Oxford University Press, 2022. xv + 298p.
978019762652. \$27.95.

WARWICK BALL IS AN ARCHAEOLOGIST AND HISTORIAN, and that gives *East of the Wardrobe* a particular disciplinary insight. Much of what he sets out has been seldom explored concerning the Chronicles of Narnia, and Ball’s work in Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, and Ethiopia, as well as his study of Near Eastern influence on the Roman Empire, displays a broad knowledge of Arabic, Persian, and Turkish literature, as well as numerous Near Eastern and some Far