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## Editorial

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## Mythcon 51: The Mythic, the Fantastic, and the Alien

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## Editorial

### Theodore James Sherman

I want to thank all those who sent letters and emails—both positive and negative—about my first issue of *Mythlore*. Generally, the response to the previous issue was overwhelmingly supportive. I appreciate your thoughts about the new format and style of *Mythlore*.

A problem has arisen regarding the article “The Commonplace Book: Charles Williams’s Early Approach to the Arthurian Poetry” in the most recent issue of *Mythlore*. We did not receive the rights to publish from the unpublished manuscript book of Charles Williams until after *Mythlore* had already gone to press. Thus, technically, we were in copyright violation. David Higham Associates, the agent for Charles Williams’s estate, however, has given us permission to quote from the Williams manuscript provided that we state that the estate retains all rights to that manuscript and that the portions of the manuscript published in *Mythlore* remain under copyright by the estate and may not be subsequently quoted or published without the express permission of David Higham Associates. Allow me to thank publicly Georgette Versinger for bringing this problem to my notice and David Higham Associates for its willingness to work with *Mythlore* to resolve this problem equitably.

This current issue of *Mythlore* contains a very good mix of articles on works by C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien. Charles A. Huttar’s essay “C. S. Lewis’s Prufrockian Vision in *The Great Divorce*” examines the influence of Eliot’s early poem “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” on Lewis’s dream vision fantasy *The Great Divorce*. The next essay, “Top Ten Rejected Plot Twists from *The Lord of the Rings*: A Textual Excursion into the ‘History of *The Lord of the Rings*,’” examines and details Tolkien’s developing understanding of the direction *The Lord of the Rings* should take. In that essay, David Bratman provides us with a wonderful window into the mind of a maker at work. Devin Brown’s article—“From Isolation to Community: Ransom’s Spiritual Odyssey”—explores Ransom’s transformation from a position of isolation at the beginning of *Out of the Silent Planet* to his position as Head of the community of St. Anne’s in *That Hideous Strength*. The next essay—C. M. Adderley’s “Meeting Morgan le Fay: J. R. R. Tolkien’s Theory of Subcreation and the Secondary World of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*”—applies Tolkien’s theories of the artist as a

subcreator and of the artist's creation as a secondary world to the Middle English alliterative poem *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. David Landrum then investigates C. S. Lewis's portrayal of priests and the Divine in *Till We Have Faces* in his essay "Three Bridge-Builders: Priest-Craft in *Till We Have Faces*." The final essay of this issue, Jonathan Himes's "What J. R. R. Tolkien Really Did with the Sampo," examines and describes the methods and ways in which Tolkien used and modified the Finnish epic *The Kalevala* in his creation of the tales that became *The Silmarillion*.

As the articles in this issue show, the peer review process for submissions is working quite well. While we have had to turn back some submissions, we have accepted many others. The majority of authors who have had submissions rejected have been encouraged to revise their papers and resubmit them. I attempt to provide the authors with the report(s) I receive from the reviewers, so that they often receive very detailed suggestions as to how to improve the submitted articles. Authors who have had their submissions rejected have, for the most part, been quite receptive to the suggestions made by the reviewers. A few, however, have either disagreed with those recommendations or wanted to correspond with me at length about them. I will not engage in such correspondence for two reasons: [1] the peer reviewers are acknowledged authorities in their respective fields and [2] I do not have the time. When a reviewer and I agree on a submission, then I notify the author of our decision, which is final. When we disagree, I send the article to a second reviewer to break the stalemate. All submissions are sent to the reviewers anonymously—I remove the author's name and any identifying comments—and the reviewers, likewise, are anonymous to the authors. Thus, when an article is accepted for publication, it is on the basis of the quality of that article and not on the basis of its authorship; similarly, when an article is rejected, it is because of the inherent flaws in the article and not because of the authorship.

Please note in this issue the Letters section. I will include a Letters section in subsequent issues as long as I have a sufficient number of letters. I hope subscribers will use the Letters section to comment upon previous articles or to ask questions of the authors, which I will forward for a response.

This year is the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, so I would like to focus the final issue of 2000 on *The Chronicles of Narnia*. The deadline for submissions for that issue will be 1 November 2000. Suggestions for other "themed" issues are always welcome.