



Mythcon 52
The Mythic, the Fantastic,
and the Alien

Albuquerque, New Mexico
July 29 - August 1, 2022

(in-person and virtual)

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*Mythcon 52 logo on front cover by Bethany Abrahamson and Alicia Fox-Lenz
Program design by Alicia Fox-Lenz and Leslie A. Donovan*

Program Information

The print version of the Mythcon 52 Program Book reflects information available by 7/22/2022. Changes to it will be announced on Saturday morning at the Opening Ceremonies or will be available at the Registration and Information table. The digital version of the program will be updated as needed.

To work toward being stewards of a more sustainable world, the Mythcon 52 Organizing Committee has chosen to promote digital materials and print only a few hard copy versions of our program book that will be for sale during the conference. Paper, ink, printing press machinery, and other resources involved in producing materials we can hold in our hands damage the world around us. As much as we love physical items for their representations of experiences, our Mythcon 52 organizers think many of the authors we love and admire would appreciate our desire to reduce our environmental impact on the world around us and preserve resources so that future generations can continue to take part in Mythcons. Since we recognize that some attendees may be less able to navigate digital versions of materials, we will have committee members and volunteers available at the Registration table willing to assist attendees who want to use our free digital materials throughout Mythcon 52 and help us be better stewards of the natural world.

Registered attendees will be provided free

- Digital versions of our program with online links for various tracks of virtual and livestreamed presentations and events
- Single-page, print copies of the conference schedule of presentations and activities with their locations.

Requirements

All Mythcon 52 participants are required to abide by all policies detailed in this program, including the COVID-19 Safety Policy and Community Guidelines. Thank you for your cooperation.

A Welcome Note from the Co-Chairs, Megan B. Abrahamson and Leslie A. Donovan

We hope you are as excited as we are for an in-person Mythcon! This year's program is a diverse one, with good Inklings coverage as well as explorations of newer Mythopoeic multimedia.

After being delayed in 2020, and transformed into a virtual "halfling" Mythcon for 2021, we are thrilled to welcome everyone to sunny Albuquerque, NM, for this long-expected Mythcon, where our food and our weather are HOT!

We continue to be committed to keeping our attendees as healthy as possible, maintaining our COVID safety policy of vaccines or negative tests and masking during non-eating activities. Please also review our Community Guidelines and adhere to them.

Leslie and Megan would like to thank each other for keeping the other one sane; Bethany Abrahamson and Alicia Fox-Lenz for the logo; Cami Agan for her work as the papers coordinator; Lynne Darga for her role as registrar; Alicia Fox-Lenz for her work on the program and for maintaining social media hype; Tim Lenz for handling the Virtual and Livestreaming tracks for this first ever Hybrid Con; Tech Mods Ben Dressler and Jessica Dickinson Goodman; Bruce Leonard for handling the auction; Lee Speth for handling the members table and Golfimbul; the Council of Stewards for their assistance in moderating sessions; our in-person committee Rachel Briggs, Dawn Catanach, Sarah Collins, Jeanell Pelsor, and Pat Yarrow; and especially our last minute volunteers—Pablo Guss, Hailey Hamilton-Baca, Kivrin Hopkins, Paul Irwin, Samantha Sena, and Zane Shirley—for keeping things running smoothly well through the conference; and many, many others, besides!

We are also grateful to those below for their kindness and patience in working with us to put all the pieces successfully together for this Mythcon:

- 21st Century Public Academy staff (especially Angela, Jeremy, Jim, and Mary)*
- The Daily Grind staff (especially Greg)*
- FedEx Office Print and Ship Center staff (especially Cherise and Dora)*
- Green Jeans Farmery staff (especially Barbie at Santa Fe Brewing Company and Matt at Amore Neapolitan Pizzeria)*
- Hampton Inn-Midtown staff (especially Joe)*
- Masek Rocky Mountain Golf Carts staff (especially Dedra)*
- Midtown Self Storage staff (especially Ashley and Liz)*
- Silva Screen Plus staff (especially Ed)*
- Visit Albuquerque (especially Liz and Misty)*

Until such time as we ask the perennial question "what do you do with a drunken hobbit?" we the Mythcon 52 Committee remain "at your service!"

The Mythic, the Fantastic, and the Alien

Mythcon 52's theme provides multiple opportunities to explore the Other in fantasy and mythopoeic literature. Tolkien spoke in "On Fairy-stories" of "the desire to visit, free as a fish, the deep sea; or the longing for the noiseless, gracious, economical flight of a bird." We invite discussion about the types of fantasy that are more likely to put us into contact with the alien, such as time portal fantasy and space travel fantasy. In addition to Inklings, some writers who might be discussed that deal particularly well with the truly alien include Lovecraft, Gaiman, Le Guin, Tepper, and others. Other topics that might be fruitfully explored are: depictions of the alien Other in film and television (*Dune*, *Loki*, etc.); developing constructed languages truly different from those of Earth-based humans; fantastical Others in indigenous myths (such as Coyote and Spider Woman); and American folklore about the alien (flying saucers, alien abduction, Area 51, Roswell).

Virtual and Hybrid Attendance

Encouraged by the success of Mythcon 51, Online Midwinter Seminar 1, and the appointing of Tim Lenz as Online Events Manager, as well as to accommodate attendees who find our COVID-19 precautions to be unsatisfactory, the Mythcon 52 Committee has elected to hybridize our first ever Mythopoeic Society event!

People from all over the world are presenting in person and virtually at this Mythcon, and both virtual and in-person events will be available to attendees no matter where they are in the world. We're so excited to diversify our programming in this way and look forward to seeing how all the technology works out for us.

Virtual attendees can view virtual presentations as well as limited livestreamed in-person talks.

In-person attendees can view all in-person events as well as watch virtual presentations on a large screen with other in-person attendees.

All attendees, but especially virtual ones, are invited to join our Mythsoc Discord community for continued discussion of the papers and panels: discord.com/invite/WwdbHaUDDs. Use Discord to:

- Keep apprised of online and livestreamed material
- Discuss in-person and online talks
- Inquire about golf cart rides in person
- Keep in touch with Mythies all year.

Social Media Information and Hashtags

Other than the [Mythsoc Discord](https://discord.com/invite/WwdbHaUDDs), you can also find us on Facebook (Mythopoeic Society & Mythcon) and on Twitter @mythsoc. We also host a lively Facebook group called The Mythopoeic Society. We hope to see you on one of our groups!

Please hashtag any tweets with #mythcon52 and/or @mythsoc during the conference! We usually compile an album of Mythcons past on Facebook as well and need your help to fill it up! Please post your pictures on Discord in #mythcon, on the Facebook group, or hashtag them on Instagram and Twitter.

Guests of Honor

Rivera Sun—Author Guest of Honor

Rivera Sun is a change-maker, a cultural creative, a protest novelist, and an advocate for nonviolence and social justice. Her young adult fantasy series, the Ari Ara Series, has been widely acclaimed by teachers, parents, and peace activists for its blending of fantasy and adventure with social justice issues. Going beyond dragon-slayers and sword-swingers, heroes and sheroes in Ari Ara's world stop wars and wage peace. In all her works, Rivera Sun advocates that if we want to build a culture of peace, we have to tell new stories that still appreciate, but go beyond the old myths, epics, and legends that rehash outdated war and violence narratives. *The Way Between*, the first book in the Ari Ara Series, has been read by numerous groups of all ages, while the second book in the series, *The Lost Heir*, won the 2019 Nautilus Award Silver Medal.

Rivera Sun's essays have been published in hundreds of journals nationwide. She is a frequent speaker and presenter at schools, colleges and universities, where her novel *The Dandelion Insurrection* has been taught in literature and political science courses. Rivera Sun is also the editor of *Nonviolence News*, an activist, and a trainer in making change with non-violence. Her essays and writings are syndicated by **Peace Voice** and have appeared in journals nationwide. She lives in an Earthship house in New Mexico. For more about Rivera Sun, visit her website at www.riverasun.com.



David Bratman—Scholar Guest of Honor



David Bratman has been reading Tolkien for over fifty years, and has been writing Tolkien scholarship for nearly as long. His earliest contribution to the field was the first-ever published Tale of Years for the First Age, right after *The Silmarillion* was published. Since then, he's published articles with titles like "Top Ten Rejected Plot Twists from *The Lord of the Rings*," "Hobbit Names Aren't from Kentucky," and "Liquid Tolkien" (on Tolkien and music). He's been co-editor of *Tolkien Studies: An Annual Scholarly Review* since 2013, and has written or edited its annual "Year's Work in Tolkien Studies" since 2004. David edited *The Masques of Amen House* by Charles Williams and contributed the bio-bibliographical appendix on the Inklings to Diana Pavlac Glyer's *The Company They Keep*. He has also written on C.S. Lewis, Ursula Le Guin, Mervyn Peake, Neil Gaiman, and others.

For the Mythopoeic Society he was editor of the monthly bulletin *Mythprint* for fifteen years, and has worked on many Mythopoeic Conferences, including serving twice as chair. He's a retired academic librarian and an active classical music reviewer who lives with his wife, Berni (a soprano and violinist), and two cats in a house they call Minnipin Cottage.

Location Info

Hotel

Mythcon 52 sleeping arrangements are at the Hampton Inn University/Midtown. Apart from offering us a most welcome very low group rate, the hotel's amenities include: Free hot breakfast, free parking, free WiFi, outdoor pool, and fitness center. Located in Albuquerque's midtown, it provides easy access to the I-40 freeway and is a 14-minute drive, taxi, or rideshare from the airport.

However, for this Mythcon, we will not have any presentation or activities in the hotel. Unlike some hotels for past Mythcons, the Hampton Inn's limited programming space is not available to us because it was previously reserved by another group on the same dates of our Mythcon. It is important that we respect the other group's priority and the hotel staff. Please do not take over seemingly unoccupied hotel spaces without consulting Mythcon 52 organizers.

Conference and Programming Venues

Since the Hampton Inn could not accommodate our meeting space needs, Mythcon has gone back to school this year—literally! All of our daytime events—opening ceremony, presentations, members' meeting, and closing ceremony—and some of our evening activities will be held at the 21st Century Public Academy, a local charter school. The school, whose mascot is a purple dragon, is a great fit for us, evoking past Mythcons held in university classrooms, but with the added perk of not sleeping in university dorm rooms! It is about .25 miles or a 5-minute walk from the hotel on a road with very little traffic. It's a flat, easy walk for the able-bodied, even in the summer (It's a dry heat!), but free transportation will be provided for those attendees who need or want assistance.

Welcome Reception and Banquet

The Hampton Inn is conveniently located near many fantastic local food options for lunches and dinners. Across the street (not even .1 miles) is Green Jeans Farmery, an outdoor eatery, where Mythies are invited to take meals and where we will hold our Stewards' Reception on Friday evening. Our Welcome Reception will be held upstairs on a shaded patio with plenty of space and will feature free pizza, beverages (some from the onsite craft brewery), and snacks. In addition to having ample outdoor seating for safer, maskless interactions, Green Jeans has a wide variety of food options with counter service, including burgers, barbecue, pizza, pho, smoothies, coffee, ice cream, and craft beer (and local wine)!

Our banquet will be held at The Daily Grind, a local favorite only .4 miles away, just up the street from the Hampton Inn (again, free transportation will be provided for any who wish it). It features a tasty and varied menu, lots of outdoor seating, and beer/wine offerings. Our banquet there will feature several popular New Mexican dishes. Some vegetarian and gluten-free options will be available. Tickets for the banquet must be purchased separately from Mythcon 52 registration on [our website at \\$40 each](#).

Golf Cart Transportation

Attendees with concerns about getting between the hotel and school for programming can rest assured that we will have one large golf cart available for transportation as needed during the mornings, lunch breaks, and dinner breaks. We cannot guarantee driver availability in the middle of scheduled programming, but we will do our best. Because we need to lock up the golf carts overnight, the last golf cart rides are at 8:30 p.m. every night (which may be before the end of scheduled programming, so plan accordingly).

Please use the Mythcon areas of the [Society Discord](#) to reach out with questions or to hail a golf cart driver. You can tag [@needaride](#) on Discord to flag down the authorized golf cart drivers. Since this is the first time we have provided such transportation, we ask for your patience and good humor to help us sort out reasonable logistics for this perk.

Useful Info

Registration Desk

The Registration Desk where you will pick up your name badge that allows you access to the conference will be at the school near the entry. It will be open on Friday starting at 12:30 pm and Saturday through lunch. After lunch on Saturday, the Registration Desk will be located in or just outside the Dealers' Room. In addition to picking up your own registration materials, the Registration Desk will be staffed with friendly and helpful people willing to answer questions or assist with troubleshooting.

Sanitizing Supplies

All spaces in the school used for Mythcon 52 will have containers of sanitizing wipes that will be used to wipe down surfaces throughout the day as well as dispensers of hand sanitizer. Please use these sanitizing supplies as liberally and as often as you wish. We also have gloves available in main or large areas of the school for anyone who wishes to use them. It is our responsibility to keep areas in the school sanitized as safely and thoroughly as possible, attendees must be aware that other areas such as the hotel, Green Jeans Farmery, and The Daily Grind are responsible for maintaining their own policies and procedures around sanitizing.

Moderators

Each presentation, panel, or roundtable not already presided over by a Society Steward will be assigned a Steward or Mythcon Committee member as a Moderator. These Moderators will help presenters stick to time limits, keep an eye on masks in the audience so the presenter doesn't have to, and help sanitize the room between sessions. Programming that is virtual, livestreamed, or requires AV, will also have Tech Mods to make sure tech equipment behaves. Presenters will manage all the basics of their own sessions, with Moderators intended to assist only when needed.

Dealers' Room

Our Dealers' Room will be in a large double-room space (#117-118) in the school that will make it easy for Mythies (Mythcon attendees) to browse merch, ask questions, or simply lounge someplace out of the way to visit with friends. At our MythSoc tables, you will find an array of goodies available for purchase (and some may even be free!), including books from Mythpress, copies of our literary magazine *Mythic Circle*, t-shirts and tote bags from the current and some past Mythcons, and other selected items. Because our conference is smaller than usual this year, we have arranged for only a few specially selected external vendors to offer merchandise for sale in our Dealers' Room. This year's vendors will sell books, tie-dyed fabrics and clothing, fantasy-themed toys, and jewelry. Although some vendors will not be present all days or at all times the space is open, our Dealers' Room will be open: Friday, 2:00-5:00 pm; Saturday, 9:00 am-5:00 pm; and Sunday, 10:00 am-4:00 pm. The Dealers' Room will not be open during evening programming.

Exhibit

During the conference, a special exhibit of rare mythopoeic-themed art and board game items from Bruce Leonard's personal collection will be on display at the school in Room 121 and/or 130. As attendees of previous Mythcons know, Bruce's exhibits always elicit envy and excitement!

Other Things You May Want to Know

(bits that may be confusing to newbies or people who have not attended for a while)

Listed in rough order of when you might want to know about them.

Opening Ceremonies

Mythcon participants are invited (but not required!) to take part in our opening festivities Saturday morning by wearing costumes or regalia and carrying banners in our procession to the school's cafeteria room in which our Opening Ceremonies will be held. Those wishing to take part in the Opening Procession should meet by 8:45 am inside or just outside the hotel's south side door on the ground floor. Our Opening Ceremony will feature the Plenary Address by our Scholar Guest of Honor, David Bratman.

Graduation Ceremony

After our procession, this year's Opening Ceremonies begin with a brief graduation ceremony for Mythies who graduated during the last few years but were unable to be recognized and participate in a formal graduation ceremony at their school because of COVID restrictions. Anyone who wants to participate in the graduation ceremony is encouraged to wear their regalia in the procession from the hotel. And, of course, David Bratman, our Scholar Guest of Honor, will be the dream-come-true graduation speaker for all those graduating at Mythcon 52.

Grab-and-Go Hospitality

Instead of our usual packed wall-to-wall free-for-all known as the Hospitality Suite, this year Mythcon 52 will encourage COVID safety by offering Grab-and-Go Hospitality. In a Hampton Inn room (number to be announced at the Opening Ceremony and posted to Discord), we will have a limited snacks and beverages available free for attendees. You may simply drop by and pick up what you'd like. Then, folks can gather to visit with others in small groups, perhaps outside, to relax, nosh, nibble, drink and generally hang out after evening programming has ended. Green Jeans Farmery offers lots of outdoor seating that may serve this purpose well, especially if someone buys a beer or soda from one of the restaurants on site. Grab-and-Go Hospitality will be available mostly on Friday and Saturday nights from 9:00 pm to midnight, though you might be able to swing by to pick up something earlier in the day if someone is available.

Masquerade

Mythcon masquerades are a non-competitive, friendly event. Attendees of any age are invited to participate. Any science fiction-, fantasy-, or other mythopoeic-themed costume entries are welcome and may be presented by individuals or groups. You may show a costume you've created yourself or one built by someone else. Questions may be directed to the Masquerade coordinator Lynn Maudlin. This year's masquerade will take place in the school on Saturday evening, with "winners" to be announced after Mark Miner's special presentation of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*.

Food Sculptures

At the Sunday evening banquet, some Mythcon attendees try their hands at the quaint Mythcon tradition of the Food Sculpture. These attendees will use leftover food items to construct puns, homages, or both that relate to conference themes, papers, or works by the Guests of Honor. The artists take their food sculptures around to the various tables of diners, and finally to the Guests of Honor, to be viewed and admired (but NOT—usually—consumed!).

Sale of College Land

One of the oldest Mythcon traditions, the Sale of College Land is a reference to the college dons' meeting that opens Lewis's *That Hideous Strength*. Take part in this year's Sale of the College Land early Sunday (2:17 am) at Madrigal Hall.

Society Auction

Lee Speth and Bruce Leonard will coordinate our annual Silent/Live Auction on Sunday at 4:00 pm in the Dealers' Room (#117-118). This year's auction is likely to be the largest on Society history with more than 200 books having been donated by Society members since our last in-person Mythcon in 2019. So, leave room in your suitcases to take home books! The auction features a diverse selection of donated books and art from members as well as local artists and writers. All proceeds go directly to support the Society's activities. Please have a look at the many gems among our available items, which will be on display in the Dealer's Room throughout the conference. You will be assigned a bidders number when you pick up your registration materials

Members' Meeting and Closing Ceremonies

While the Members' Meeting portion of Mythcon will be of interest primarily to members of the Mythopoeic Society, all conference participants are welcome to attend. Led by the Mythopoeic Society Stewards, the meeting will announce and discuss timely and necessary Society topics. Following the meeting, we will host our traditional leave-taking closing ceremonies which feature singing songs dear to Mythcon regulars. Words and music appear later in this program. To start, we will sing the Society's anthem, the "Chorea Magna," followed by a rendition by all of Diana Paxson's "The Baby and the Bird" and, last but not least, our rousing singing of multiple rounds of the most civil gripe session known to fandom, called "What do you do with a Drunken Hobbit?" during which folks compose their own verses on the fly, we sing them, and follow with a chorus of "way hey, the Mythcon's over." And finally it is, indeed, over. Members' Meeting and Closing Ceremonies take place Monday morning, 10:00 am to 12:00 noon in the school' cafeteria. Be aware that school personnel will be working in the main office at the front of the building that day only.

Special Programming

Listed in rough order of when they take place on the schedule.

Golfimbul

Show up at a to-be-determined dark parking lot, freak the mundanes, and compete to win in one of three categories in the game invented by Bullroarer Took.

Bardic Circle

Although Bardic Circle will look different this year because of limited space for after-hours programming, any who wish to share music, poetry, and short stories in the mythopoeic tradition are welcome to do so. Poets and musicians are encouraged to gather for Bardic Circle in spaces that will discourage the transmission of COVID or other infections. While we do not have access to spaces in the hotel or the school this year for Bardic Circle, people are welcome to explore location options. Some possibilities for outdoor spaces are the less public upper patio of Green Jeans Food Court, around the hotel's pool (though seating will be limited), or other nearby outdoor locations. Small groups might wish to gather in someone's private hotel room or in one of our Grab and Go Hospitality rooms. To discuss possibilities for Bardic Circle, seek out David Lenander, who has offered to help sort out options with any who want to participate or just watch and listen.

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight Performance

Mark Miner will perform some of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. His focus will be the poem's third section—the hunts of deer, boar, and fox...and Gawain. Mark will perform about an hour of epic poetry in a two-hour block of time. With the participation-minded audience sitting in a circle with dual-language scripts in hand, we begin with the first reader reciting Stanza 1 (lines 1-19) in a Modern English translation. Then, Mark will offer the same material in the original Middle English. And so on, back and forth. This gives everyone a chance to participate in “Kol-Bitar” fashion, as well as giving folks a chance to hear the rich sound textures and elaborate diction of the 14th century original. Having developed this format in the 1990s, it has worked well for Miner's performances in innumerable venues in 32 states over the last 25 years.

Dungeons & Dragons

During part of Sunday's programming, participants may take part in a mini *Dungeons & Dragons* (5e) adventure. Come prepared with your own 2nd level character or play with a pre-made one. No experience required, but signing up ahead of time [at this link is encouraged](#).

Tolkien and SFF Trivia

Back by popular demand, Lynne Darga will once again host a trivia game with two trivia sets: one a deep-dive into Tolkien esoterica and the other more general science fiction/fantasy—both designed to be challenging! All are invited to participate, or just watch.

Titles and Abstracts of Papers, Panels, Roundtables, Workshops

In-person, virtual, and livestreamed talks are indicated on the Schedule.

Aliens and Others in the Inklings

David Bratman, Janet Brennan Croft, Robin A. Reid, John Rosegrant (panel)

David Bratman, Janet Brennan Croft, Robin Reid, and John Rosegrant discuss the alien and the Other in the works of the Inklings, with time for audience conversation.

An Astronomical Breakdown of David Lindsay's *A Voyage to Arcturus*

Rob Stauffer

David Lindsay's first novel, *A Voyage to Arcturus*, just over a century old, takes us all the way to another planet, Tormance, circling a distant, but prominent star, Arcturus, in our night sky in order to explore the relationship among a person, his body, his spirit, and his soul. Our hero, Maskull, accomplishes this through encounters with strange beings, by traveling through foreign lands, and by experiencing difficult body morphology. The relationships and the physical rules Maskull suffers through on Tormance in order to learn the truth about himself has been explored by many scholars over the past century, but they tend to ignore the most obvious and overwhelming relationship in the book: the bodies that move about in Tormance's sky. This paper explores the relationship the two suns, Alppain and Branchspell, and Tormance's moon, Teargeld, have with Maskull, and how they shape his quest just by being present. In mapping out the sky over Tormance, Lindsay tells an even older story about how the universe interacts with all people and changes their understanding, even though it seems to be remote and unapproachable. While Lindsay repudiates the false seances and theosophical societies he was steeped in as a child and young adult in Scotland at the end of the nineteenth century, he also demonstrates one of their greatest tropes with his planetary system: as above, so below. He shows how, by studying the formations of the universe, one may come to understand oneself. While Lindsay delivers his understanding of the principles of the universe in ways that can be difficult and tedious to read, particularly in his later novels, *A Voyage to Arcturus* is a symbolic novel that contains a great number of insights that spurred on the more comprehensible and well-received writers of fantasy like C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien. Lindsay also helped to create a bridge from the eighteenth and nineteenth century symbolic novel writers like Novalis and George MacDonald. This paper looks at one small element of this novel—the astronomy of the story—which might be a key to understanding this difficult text and the role it plays in creating modern fantasy.

Beyond the Borders of Memory: First Age Beleriand as Catastrophic Loss

Cami D. Agan

This paper explores the ways the Great Tales of the Elder Days employ particular stylistic techniques to mark out borders and boundaries in Beleriand, as the Noldor return and besiege Morgoth. Ultimately, the account's concern with naming, locating, and using coordinates reveals the porous and vulnerable nature of borders/boundaries [all doomed to fall] as well as the desire to elegize the landscape, Beleriand, that is lost "under the waves."

Bertilak, Britomart, and Bombadil Walk into a Bar: Nature as Ambiguous Other in Tolkien's England

Amber Lehning

Ecocriticism of Tolkien's work has long relied on the richness and deep-rooted nature of Middle-earth. From the crushing ice of the Helcaraxë to the hottest reaches of far Harad, from the Blessed Realm in the uttermost West to the mysterious lands of Rhûn where the stars are strange, from the wasteland horrors of Mordor to the pastoral paradise of the Shire, Tolkien's wild natural world partakes in every bit of the ambiguity present in the modern concept of wilderness. This ambiguity arises out of the clash of cultures, from the Classical and Continental to the Celtic and Northern, which combined over centuries of turmoil and war in Britain to form the uniquely English worldview of

which Tolkien is such a representative example. When the grim darkness of the Germanic wilderness combined with the uncanny visions of the Celtic Otherworld to form in the English cultural imagination the touchstone of the greenwood, the old terrors of monsters like Grendel or the *draugar* were not completely dislocated by Arthur's chivalric adventurers, Shakespeare's star-crossed lovers, or Robin Hood and his band of Merry Men. Those older, darker visions live on in the ambiguous, almost contradictory, ways that the natural world is presented in Anglophone literature, from as early as the Middle English period and continuing right up to the present day. Using an early twenty-first century mythological and cultural perspective, this paper will examine the dual nature of wilderness as depicted in the Late Medieval *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, wander through the ambiguous and yet historically present forests of adventure in Edmund Spenser's Early Modern *The Faerie Queene*, and discuss the various ways that Tolkien accessed, used, reflected on, and departed from these and other stereotypically English representations of the natural world as Ambiguous Other, particularly in the elusive Victorian/Edwardian figure of Tom Bombadil.

A Charles Williams Arthurian Poetry Workshop

Eric Rauscher (workshop)

Come for a reading of Charles Williams' poetry and stay for the discussion. As a workshop, audience participation is encouraged!

Clinical Analysis of a Hobbit Afflicted with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: Assessment, Diagnosis, and Treatment

Lawrence Santiago

Although Frodo survived the quest of the Ring, he never regained the zest for life he had before the journey. After the events at Mount Doom, Frodo begins to exhibit signs and symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as a result of his compounded burden of carrying the One Ring and experiencing horrific events over the course of his journey. Tolkien had many horrific experiences as a World War I veteran, he was constantly in fear of the German artillery shells, which could be frequently heard like a roar on the battlefield. The other sound he recalled was the cries of soldiers who were wounded during battle. These horrific experiences resurfaced decades later through Frodo's experiences in *The Lord of the Rings*. Frodo's stabbing at Weathertop was his first major traumatic event of the journey. In addition, the blade had supernatural powers that nearly converted him into an evil wraith. The combination of the physical stabbing injury and his near conversion was greatly traumatic to Frodo. Not only did Frodo's stabbing contribute to his PTSD, the burden of carrying the Ring greatly added to his trauma. In Chapter 9 of Book Five, Shelob the giant spider stings Frodo and injects a paralytic agent into him. This is now his second violent injury during the quest of the Ring. Shortly after this, Frodo was kidnapped by Orcs. Kidnapping by itself is known as a cause of PTSD. After Frodo's failure to destroy the Ring, Gollum appears and bites Frodo's finger off, which briefly returns the Ring to Gollum. The bite was the final injury that sealed Frodo's trauma. During the journey home, Frodo had great anxiety when they reached Weathertop, the site of his stabbing. PTSD victims avoid reminders of the trauma. Assuming hobbit brains are similar to human brains, the reminder of the trauma triggered Frodo's "fight or flight" response, even though there was no actual danger. Once they returned to the Shire, Frodo experienced the old stab wound pain every year on October 6. PTSD can cause physical pain, even though there is no physiological reason for the pain. The combination of Frodo's PTSD and his shame of his failure to destroy the Ring prevented him from re-integrating into life in the Shire. People with PTSD are often unable to function at work and become isolated from friends and family. Frodo went on to write about their journey, and it may have served as therapy for him. For PTSD victims, telling their story is often profoundly meaningful to them, but it is not enough in itself to heal them. Nothing on Middle-earth could cure him, which led to his decision to travel to Valinor. Valinor was his last resort.

Common Elements in YA Mythic Portal Fantasies

Sultana Raza

While Tolkien was inspired by Norse and Anglo-Saxon myths, he incorporated certain plot structures from Greco-Roman myths in Beren and Lúthien and Fall of Gondolin. Contemporary authors continue to be inspired by myths as well. This paper will explore mythic YA fantasy, and common elements mainly in the works of Rick Riordan, Michael

Scott, Eoin Colfer, and Cassandra Clare, all of whom use portals to enable their main characters to enter parallel universes. Riordan often uses museums/artefacts as portals to fantastical dimensions. His Percy Jackson series, the Heroes of Olympus series, and the Kane Chronicles are well-researched, while the dry sense of humour, well-paced plots and fantastical action sequences keep his young readers spell-bound. Older readers can find his in-depth research and the fact that the Greek gods tend to stick to certain archetypal characteristics (even though they've been dragged to the modern world) to be interesting. The main pre-occupation of the female protagonist (Helen Hamilton) in Josephine Angelini's *Star-crossed* series is romance, even though she literally has to go through hell to fulfill her destiny. For example, in *The Hunt of the Unicorn* (2011) by C. C. Humphreys, the Unicorn tapestries in Cloisters in New York act as a portal, providing passage to another world. In his *Artemis Fowl* series, Eoin Colfer focuses on Celtic lore, certain elements of which can be discerned in Tolkien's works as well. C.S. Lewis was inspired by Christian myths, and Cassandra Clare's YA *Shadowhunter* series seems to be derived from Biblical myths (complete with angels and Archangels). Though focused around Flamel, *The Secrets of the Immortal Nicholas Flamel* series by Michael Scott combines features/personages from various myths. Since the young main characters aren't familiar with myths, their encounter with gods and monsters from these worlds are akin to interacting with aliens. They end up learning the rules of these new societies and the functioning of magical systems or implements quite painfully. Authors building half of their stories from myths already have well established godly/mythic characters and worlds to play with. Hopping in and out of these shadowy worlds through various portals is another characteristic of these novels. Most of the authors try to anchor these parallel universes in certain spots in the real world, so as to give their readers a sense of excitement that these mythic worlds are not that far from their everyday existence. It's also interesting to explore which landmarks or buildings, cities, or places in the USA or Europe have been conflated with portals or entry points to these hidden worlds. Issues that modern teens face, such as being raised by a single parent, how to deal with violence or bullying, or budding romances with an ethnically different person are dealt with obliquely in these novels. Though they're meant for Young Adults, older readers interested in the different ways old myths are recycled or twisted can enjoy reading them too. Especially if they're interested in exploring how well the archetypes of gods/monsters are handled in these modern takes.

“Crossings in Mist”: Kantian transformations in *The Lathe of Heaven*

Daniel Viorica

A theme for this year's Mythcon is 'The Alien'; there is perhaps nothing more alien to contemporary science fiction and fantasy discourse than Enlightenment philosopher Immanuel Kant. He represents much of what today's fantasy, especially under the influence of Ursula K. Le Guin, opposes: a human-privileged universe predicated on rational control. But I argue that a Kantian reading of a scene in Le Guin's novel *The Lathe of Heaven* can in fact enrich our understanding of Le Guin's noted Taoist themes of action and inaction, complicating the preexisting scholarly consensus that the novel provides a straightforward critique of Western culture. In the scene in question, the novel's antagonist Dr. William Haber confronts protagonist George Orr with Kantian language. Scholars Betsy Huang and Lewis Call have argued that Orr's rebuttal is Taoist in nature, reflecting Le Guin's philosophical preference for Taoism in opposition to Western rationality. But none have noted that Orr rebuts Haber's arguments on Kantian terms as well as on Taoist terms; his Kantian language bleeds into Taoist language. Le Guin's project, instead of rejecting a Kantian worldview altogether, decenters Kantian ethics from its sole focus on human rationality. In doing so, Le Guin draws a connection between Kantian ethics and Taoism, years before such a connection was explored in mainstream philosophical discourse.

The Environmental Bioethics of Space Travel: 'Alien' Bodies in C. S. Lewis' Cosmic Trilogy

Journee Cotton

C. S. Lewis lived through numerous significant historic events. Notably, he was alive during the space race and spoke to the potential philosophical and ethical dilemmas that may arise through space travel, especially concerning contact with 'alien' life. While the idea may be found in other parts of his oeuvre, Lewis explicitly considers space travel and contact with aliens in *The Cosmic Trilogy*. His texts offer unique perspectives on space travel that is not centric to the earth-born 'human,' rather it notes man's destructive attitudes towards progress and the potential harms man may enact on other

sentient beings and environments without a proper ethical framework in place. This paper seeks to introduce reading bodies at the intersection of the ‘alien’ and environmental bioethics due to their shared consideration of bodies fraught with ethical dilemmas. In Lewis’ Cosmic Trilogy the body appears to symbiotically relate to the environment: unnatural, ‘evil’ bodies exist in polluted and degenerated environments, while the reverse holds true as well. Throughout the series the bodies of Weston and Devine are situated as ‘alien’, ‘evil’, and ‘corrupted’. For instance, in *Out of the Silent Planet* rather than the Martians, the men Weston and Devine attempt to wreak havoc and destruction throughout Mars due to their colonial endeavours. Their attitudes are juxtaposed by the symbiotic nature of the ‘alien’ ‘Hnau’ (sentient beings) of Malacandra (Mars). The text clarifies that through an ethical framework the ‘Hnau’ retain balance through the symbiotic space inhabited by the ‘uncorrupted’ beings contrasted by the devastated landscape where unethical beings once lived. Thus, bodies are presented as the incarnate evidence of beings functioning or existing ‘un-bioethically’ in the environment. Furthermore, in *Perelandra* Weston’s ‘corrupted’ body is possessed and attempts to harm the ethical and ecological balance of Venus, which ultimately culminates in the destruction of his body due to bioethical err. In the final book of the series, *That Hideous Strength*, Devine is engaged in the N.I.C.E.’s plot against all bodies including the ‘alien,’ human, animal, and earth that means to ‘cleanse’ the world of their organic matter. This paper shall provide an environmental bioethical examination of the ‘alien’ figures in The Cosmic Trilogy and draw insights therein.

Establishing a Chapter and Finding a Purpose: The Writers of the Rohirrim Discover Themselves

Victoria Gaydosik, Phillip Fitzsimmons, Diane Fitzsimmons, Nolan Meditz, Ben Dressler (panel)

Our presentation will include information about chapter establishment and maintenance in order to foster more chapter development through the example of our experience. We will also review chapter activities, which are mainly related to our reading program. For our first 1+ year, we used the theme of identifying the boundaries of fantasy—specifically mythic—literature. We will review selected titles from our readings (enumerated in our chapter report in *MythPrint* 391) and discuss what we learned about delineating the territory of the mythic and the fantastic and probably some related subgenres of speculative literature. Chapter members will discuss specific titles they liked or recommended with an eye to explaining what does (or does not) make those books mythic. Young Adult literature may possibly come in for particular attention. Time will be reserved for discussing both aspects of our presentation (chapter establishment and book readings).

ET Phone Camelot: Alien Life Forms in Arthurian Fiction

Michael Torregrossa

As a living tradition, the Matter of Britain displays a voracious appetite as it grows over the centuries, absorbing characters, legends, motifs, stories, and even genres to create new Arthurian narratives. Science fiction is one genre that has recently found a place within the Arthurian tradition. Inspired by Twain’s *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court*, tales abound of time travelers journeying to Arthur’s realm, but a smaller, less well-known subset of Arthurian-themed science fiction brings various extraterrestrial creatures to Camelot. Sometimes, these beings are hostile, but, more often, they try to make the realm a better place. Most of these stories connect to and transform the figure of Merlin and those he interacts with, like the Lady of the Lake and Morgan le Fay, by recasting them as aliens. This presentation will highlight some of these developments as depicted on television and in fiction from the 1970s with *Space: 1999* up through the early 2000s with the *Stargate* franchise.

Grateful Dead Through the Lens of Tolkien

Janet Brennan Croft and David Emerson (panel)

It is our contention that Tolkien’s theories and concepts of myth and literature can and should be more broadly applied to any artistic work that exhibits the creative mythopoeic impulse. To that end, we investigate a selection of works connected with the Grateful Dead in these paired papers.

“‘But I’ll Get Back on My Feet Some Day’: Hopeful Losers in Grateful Dead Lyrics”: Many songs in the Grateful Dead repertoire, particularly those written by Robert Hunter but also those by other lyricists, feature “loser” characters:

characters who fail, in ways mundane or spectacular, usually while simultaneously deluding themselves about their chances of success. In this paper we'll examine several of these characters and their stories, applying Tolkienian terminology and concepts like *ofermod*, "Northern courage," trust in providence, and eucatastrophe. We'll compare our hopeful losers with Tolkien's characters, who hold on to hope in the bleakest of circumstances, yet temper all hopes by acknowledging that living in the physical world is "fighting the long defeat."

"Some Rise, Some Fall, Some Climb': Three Ways of Looking at Robert Hunter's 'The Giant's Harp': In this presentation we explore the world of Grateful Dead lyricist Robert Hunter's unpublished novel "The Giant's Harp." We bring some of the tools we use in fantasy literature criticism and Tolkien studies to bear on this intriguing but sometimes problematic work. First, does the world-building behind the novel and related song cycles create what we would call a consistent legendarium? Second, how does it stack up as a mythology when looking at it through the lenses of some of the classic works on comparative mythology—Eliade's myth of the eternal return, Campbell's hero's journey, and so on? Third, is "The Giant's Harp" mythopoeic? Does it have a satisfying eucatastrophe, as Tolkien defines in his essay "On Fairy-Stories"? Is there enough of the numinous about it to raise it to the level of high mythopoeic fantasy? We will close with some considerations of Hunter as a writer, what flaws and gems we saw in the tale, and why we think Hunter's work would fascinate readers interested in mythopoeic literature.

Hopeless Romantic: Sublime Impact in H. P. Lovecraft's *Innsmouth*

Joseph Rex Young

David E. Schultz describes H. P. Lovecraft's *The Shadow Over Innsmouth* as a "cosmic rewrite," reiterating to better effect the core conceits of several of Lovecraft's earlier tales. The purpose of this presentation is to use Romanticist analysis to follow up and vindicate these assessments. Lovecraft's earlier depictions of supernatural invasion of degenerate societies essentially gives voice to his own infamous xenophobia. *The Shadow Over Innsmouth* depicts a similar situation, but Lovecraft's decisions about narrative structure mean this produces a more far-reaching effect on the reader. *The Shadow Over Innsmouth* is a strong example of Mendlesohnian intrusion fantasy, in which the supernatural is introduced into the story as a disruption in the focaliser's understanding of their environment. Per Mendlesohn, this focuses the diegesis on the "wrongness" of the intrusion and turns the focaliser's attempts to restore intellectual equilibrium into the primum mobile of the plot, rather than simply its subject matter. Over the expanded, novella-length scope of the story the Innsmouth cult therefore assumes the attributes of the Romantic sublime far more effectively than its equivalents in Lovecraft's less ambitious stories. Lovecraft then utilises the "tremendous energy" David Sandner attributes to the sublime far more effectively than in his earlier stories by contrasting three successive formalistic responses to the climactic revelation of his Romanticist plot. Initial "fragmentation" as the focaliser is overcome by revelations gives way to a "possessive" attempt to fix a problem, then to a "dispossessive" abandonment of the self in light of a fresh round of revelations in the story's closing movements. By making the reader privy to this succession of responses, Lovecraft deepens the fragmentation for the reader, thus creating the scope and depth of what S. T. Joshi calls his "greatest tale of degeneration" and, arguably, his masterpiece.

"Infinite Promise":

Utopia As Alien Literary Form in *The Dispossessed* and *The Fifth Sacred Thing*

Julia DaSilva

"The darkness will be broken, /The promise kept" (Le Guin 240), ends the "Hymn of the Insurrection" in Ursula K. Le Guin's 1974 novel *The Dispossessed*, in partial fulfillment of the poem introduced at the outset, "O child Anarchia," which begins: "infinite promise/ infinite carefulness" (Le Guin 78). This paper examines the "promise" as structuring form in two works of utopian fiction, *The Dispossessed* and Starhawk's 1993 *Fifth Sacred Thing*. Both texts feature protagonists primarily made alien by the anarchic or quasi-anarchic political formations in which their consciousnesses have been shaped, who journey "back" to worlds with political landscapes closer to ours. In Le Guin's work, Shevek, a physicist from the anarchist moon colony Anarres, cut off from its home world for decades, must re-establish cultural contact in order to complete his anarchist theory of time; in Starhawk's, a Witch from the "City" in a near-future northern Bay Area where social, political,

and religious-magical life is based on a pact to protect the elements or “four sacred things” from the Stewards who have risen to protect corporate interests in what was once the United States. The core work of the fantastic or otherwise speculative modes in both cases is to alienate the approaching-utopian consciousnesses of the protagonists from the worlds more superficially “close” to that of the reader, thus paradoxically drawing the reader closer to the “alien” utopia. *The Dispossessed* is a work of science fiction that, as it reaches the core scientific problem with which it engages, Shevek’s striving to combine the “Sequency” (linearity) and “Simultaneity” (circularity) principles into a unified theory of time (Le Guin 182), approaches the fantastic and mystical. *The Fifth Sacred Thing*, in its depiction of a form of nonviolent resistance in which balancing the four sacred things gives access to the “spirit” beyond force, works with elements that might, taken by themselves, indicate a fantastic mode; but it employs them with the implicit assertion that these elements are in fact latent in our own world. In this paper, I examine how it is possible that this assertion, or Shevek’s assertion that he can simply assume the compatibility of linear and circular time, can possibly be convincing; how the authors use the fantastic to make possible a literary world in which the commitment implied by the promise is the basic unit of representation. I begin by defining the “promise” as form and looking at how it broadly structures representation in these texts, drawing primarily on ecocritical theoretical framework to then examine more closely how this form structures characters’ relationships with their world. I then proceed through a comparative close reading of core “promising” moments which implicate the reader in the possibility of subjective transformation. I argue that it is this form, that of the continual making and fulfillment of the promise, that makes it possible for the authors to do genuinely utopian work that does not collapse either into wishful improbability or dystopia.

Legends and Shadows

Scott Hodgman

In *The Worlds of J. R. R. Tolkien*, John Garth suggests that the “sudden dislocation between old and new worlds gave Tolkien a kind of visionary superpower” (12). In the same work, Garth rightly observes “this ability to visualize unreal places perfectly, and the tendency to project the world [Tolkien] inhabited onto one he only imagined,” was similar to a photographic double exposure (12). With time and the end of innocence, this “visionary superpower” might naturally have faded. However, this paper proposes that Tolkien’s relationship with the Birmingham Oratory, his second home before going to Oxford, insured that it would not. Through careful consideration of the Oratory as a literary landscape, this paper examines that relationship, and its effect on Tolkien’s fantasy. The extraordinary environment of the Oratory, its premodern and cosmological landscape, recalled the prevailing belief in Tolkien’s time of the constant interaction between the natural and supernatural world. The Oratory’s otherworldly atmosphere and rituals, along with John Henry Newman’s supernatural influence, provided the young Tolkien with a powerful context to affirm his faculty of double exposure. This approach offers a novel reading of the role religion played in Tolkien’s literary work. It takes Tolkien’s religious belief in two worlds, superimposed one on the other as an interpretive lens.

“Let’s start with the end of the world, why don’t we?”:

The Disorienting Phenomenology of N. K. Jemisin’s *The Stone Sky*

Robin Ann Reid

N. K. Jemisin’s Broken Earth trilogy made history: each novel won the Best Hugo for Novel (2016-2017-2018). Jemisin is not only the first person to win the novel award three years running, but also the first Black person *and* the first woman of color to win the novel award. Sony Entertainment purchased the series for adaptation in 2018 (Fleming), and Jemisin will be adapting her series for film. *The Fifth Season* has an epic structure (beginning in *media res*, a quest, world-changing events and characters, and supernatural forces). Given the conventions of the epic genre, my interest in this presentation is how the phenomenological style of Jemisin’s multiple narrative voices, including the use of one second-person and direct address narrator, which intersects with the narrative arc of the female protagonist, a mother, whose epic quest is to save her daughter, subverts reader expectations. My approach, like my earlier publication on Ann Leckie’s Imperial Radch trilogy (Reid), blends linguistics and phenomenology. I use M. A. K. Halliday’s functional grammar to analyze clauses in selected passages (the opening paragraphs of the Prologue and twenty-three chapters in the novel). Phenomenology is the branch of philosophy that focuses on “structures of consciousness as experienced from the first-

person point of view” (Stanford). Phenomenological literary studies “regard[s] works of art as mediators between the consciousnesses of the author and the reader or as attempts to disclose aspects of the being of humans and their worlds” (Armstrong). My analysis is informed by Sara Ahmed’s concept of disorientation developed in *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others*:

When we are orientated, we might not even notice that we are orientated: we might not even think “to think” about this point. When we experience disorientation, we might notice orientation as something we do not have. After all, concepts often reveal themselves as things to think “with” when they fail to be translated into being or action. (Ahmed, 5-6)

Ahmed defines queer phenomenology is that which “disorients” the reader, specifically she defines as “bodily experiences that throw the world up, or throw the body from its ground. Disorientation as a bodily feeling can be unsettling, and it can shatter one’s sense of confidence in the ground” (157). I would argue a trilogy that begins with the implication and claim that “the end of the world” is not the most interesting part of the story, in a Prologue subtitled, “you are here” will disorient the majority of readers, and that disorientation is only the start of Jemisin’s disorienting phenomenology.

“Long Dark Hair in Great Plaits Braided with Gold”: Black Fingon and Racebending in Transformative Tolkien Fanworks

Megan B. Abrahamson and Maria K. Alberto, to be presented by Megan B. Abrahamson

Tolkien fandom has often pointed to “diversity” in Middle-earth, but this term has long been limited to dwarves and elves and hobbits coexisting. The vast majority of fan art produced of Tolkien’s works in the past 75 years has featured fictional races all with fair skin and white features. That seemed to change on Tumblr in 2013, when fans created fan art and edits that cast Black model Cykeem White as the “face claim” for Fingon the Valiant, the Elven prince who becomes High King of the Noldor in Beleriand. The selection became relatively popular on the platform, picking up thousands of notes in a fairly small fandom and continuing to circulate and inspire other fanworks through to the present day. Between Fingon’s single physical description in *The Shibboleth of Fëanor*, where it is said that he “wore his long dark hair in great plaits braided with gold,” and the relative visibility of some early fan-creators, Fingon has become one of the Silmarillion characters most often and extensively portrayed as Black. The impetuses perpetuating this “fanon” (an interpretation widely held by fans but with little or no basis in the canon) are worth situating in the context of other popular fantasy racebends such as Black Hermione, and within the wider Tolkien fandom as a new axis of “diverse” representations. In an update from the version of this paper Megan shared at Mythcon 51, our study has surveyed fan artists to explore the reasons why transformative fans have latched onto the representation of Fingon as Black at much higher rates than any other Silmarillion character: showcasing this data will be the bulk of this presentation. We also look at some of the limitations and issues that come with this practice. *The Silmarillion* elides even the barest visual descriptions of characters while also quickly covering thousands of years’ worth of histories that regularly feature imperialism, colonialism, and even genocide without ever going into much detail about their perpetrators, victims, and aftermaths in ways that further complicate any racebending. This chapter will work to situate Black Fingon in his fannish contexts as expressed on Tumblr, and also to explore some of the criticism this depiction has faced, both from those who claim that all elves are or should be white and also from those who note that a single headcanon of Blackness is not enough to address racism endemic in certain spaces and genres—and fandoms.

“The most precious of all things is life itself—ultimate cost for perfect value”: The Alien and the Struggle of Life and Death in *Starship Troopers*

Dr. Christopher J. V. Loughlin

This paper will consider Hegelian and post-Hegelian discussion of the struggle of life and death in relationship to *Starship Troopers*. Robert Heinlein wrote *Starship Troopers* in 1959 and it has been interpreted as a right-wing, “fascist,” and Greco-Roman-inspired discussion of citizen-soldiership. At the centre of Heinlein’s work lies an explicit political and civil morality: there are many human bodies, but only some that have earned full political citizenship by staking their life in military service. But what significance does the Other have in Heinlein’s book? Why is the Other destroyed,

occupied, alienated? How does this struggle form the basis of subjectivation? This paper will consider how we can interpret the Other, the alien, on the basis of Hegelian and post-Hegelian discussion of the struggle of life and death. It will utilize Judith Butler, Michel Foucault, and Hegel to interpret the struggle for life and death in Heinlein's work and the film interpretation by Paul Verhoeven (1997). This struggle is a central pivot of Hegel's social ontology: self-consciousness exists only through an explicit staking of life and struggle (the famous dialectic of Lord and Bondsman, or Mastery and Servitude as interpreted by Kojève). Further, Foucault—in his attempt to escape dialectics and Hegel—utilized the struggle over life and death, and war, as the basis for power and subjectivation.

Mythcon Memories

Lynn Maudlin, David Bratman, Lee Speth (roundtable)

Come hear long-time Mythies Lee Speth, David Bratman, and Lynn Maudlin talk about 50+ years of Mythcons past, conference memories (and hijinks!) from a pre-pandemic world.

Mythopoeic Character and Moral Realism: Gollum as Familiar 'Alien' and (im)Moral Exemplar

Craig Boyd

Although Tolkien's brilliance as a sub-creator has gathered a great deal of attention in the secondary literature from such notable critics as Tom Shippey and Verlyn Flieger, his capacity to present characters who instantiate various virtues and vices has often been overlooked. In Middle-earth we see a 'realistic' fantasy world with many of the same moral obstacles and temptations contemporary humans face. Chief among the temptations are the lust for power, the desire for control, an unrestrained curiosity, and envy of another's position or possessions. This last temptation, envy, is Gollum's besetting vice. His grotesque appearance and linguistic eccentricities belie what Tolkien knows to be true of all of us. That is, Gollum is not so alien as the reader initially perceives. His transformation from homicidal (potential) killer in *The Hobbit* to a possibly redeemable companion in *The Lord of the Rings* is one of the more interesting storylines in Tolkien's works. And it is Gandalf's understanding of moral psychology that reveals both the moral realism of wicked habituation as well as the possibility of redemption. As Gandalf narrates Gollum's story to Frodo, we come to see the awful truth that proves to be a kind of horrific epiphany for Frodo. He discovers—as Gandalf warned—that Gollum was not so different from Hobbits. That is, Frodo comes to see in Gollum, the alien creature, what he might become if the Ring takes control. I argue that Tolkien's portrayal of Gollum (as a parallel to Frodo) serves as a kind of study in moral psychology. That is, Gollum's narrative—and his obsession with the Ring of Power—serve to show how what we perceive initially to be alien often is not so. Rather, the alien merely serves to warn us of what we can become—if unfortunate enough—through wicked habituation. Gollum's alien and corrupt character is the shadow side of each of us.

New Mexico Speculative Fiction Authors

Leslie Donovan, David Bratman, Jessica Dickinson Goodman, Rivera Sun, Grace Moone (roundtable)

New Mexico is not only a place of many enchanting sunsets and landscapes, but also home to many authors of speculative fiction. Join us in this roundtable as we discuss and introduce a few works of fantasy and science fiction by New Mexico-linked writers that our roundtable members have found particularly interesting, enjoyable, or mythopoeic. Just a few New Mexico speculative fiction writers you may have heard of are Roger Zelazny, George R. R. Martin, Diana Gabaldon, Suzy McKee Charnas, James S. A. Corey, Stephen R. Donaldson, Rebecca Roanhorse, Daniel Abraham, Fred Saberhagen, Walter Jon Williams, Melinda Snodgrass, S. M. Sterling, Jane Lindskold, Sheri S. Tepper, and of course Rivera Sun (our Mythcon Guest of Honor). While we will not have time to discuss all those listed, we will lead what we expect to be a lively, interactive discussion with attendees about the mythopoeic riches New Mexico authors offer.

Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*: Environmental Crises, Consumerism-driven Culture, and a Society Desperate for Emotional Connection

Willow Dipasquale

Philip K. Dick's 1968 novel, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, presents a dystopian future in which the environment is polluted, animal species are nearly extinct, and humans live in fear of rogue androids. While on the surface, the novel suggests familiar science fiction tropes—the anxiety of technology gaining power over people, the bleak aftermath of a nuclear global war—it is also a timely reflection of 21st century concerns: the perils of environmental crises, the burdens of a consumerism-driven culture, and a society desperate for emotional connection. Through the use of the “Other” (in this case, the android bounty hunter Rick Deckard is tasked with killing the “specials,” or what might now be called neurodivergent people), Dick confronts readers with ambiguity: the inhumane within humanity, the limitations of language to create boundaries between self and other, the bankruptcy of a culture defined by its possessions. By viewing the text through a deconstructionist lens, we can explore how Dick uses language—especially binary descriptions—to blur the line between human and nonhuman, the familiar and the other, fear and empathy. Rather than leaving readers with a stabilizing distinction between ourselves and machines, Dick reveals the notion of humanity to be as mysterious as the dreams of the electric beings that Deckard is tasked with retiring.

Queer Encounters of the Third Kind: The Alien Metaphor in *Roswell, New Mexico*

Megan B. Abrahamson, Jessica Dickinson Goodman, Grace E. Moone, Jana Stone (panel)

The 2019 television show *Roswell, New Mexico* (RNM) is the latest reboot to explore its central cast of characters, preceded by *Roswell* (TV, 1999) and the *Roswell High* YA book series (1998). Some viewers saw the hidden alien identities in those prior works as a metaphor for queerness, while others understood them to touch on other forms of oppression and alienation, but the 2019 show makes these metaphors explicit. This panel will trace the evolution of the alien metaphor in this new series, including its use of analogy to the Latina lead character's immigrant experience as a parallel to queer existence in rural America, and to introduce triads and other non-nuclear family structures. The alien metaphor thus reclaims the queer and the othered from the margins and makes them central and heroic. At a higher level, the role of the alien metaphor in science fiction functions transgressively in a real world where discussion of those identities is being censored by the state. In the case of *RNM*, positioning queer characters and characters of color as heroes that fight not only against extraterrestrial evil, but also against the everyday evil of bigotry, aligns mythopoeic concepts of good and evil along axes of inclusion and division. Far from the pure escapism that many non-genre readers assume motivates those who enjoy alien stories, *RNM* is an excellent example of the ways in which these explicitly and implicitly inclusive narratives can bring us closer to our shared reality. Attendees do not have to be familiar with the source material to enjoy the panel, and we hope to branch out in discussion to other SFF properties that engage similar tactics.

The Radiant Wyrn

Alicia Fox-Lenz

Hollow Knight (2017, Team Cherry) is an indie platforming game set in a subterranean, mostly abandoned, world of bugs. Similar gameplay to Super Mario, except dark and melancholy where Mario is bright and exuberant, and open in a way Mario isn't with its linear levels and damsel in distress. It's an unlikely game to have brought people to exercise mythopoeia, but the scant notes from the creators, coupled with the slow unveiling of the plot in disjointed clues scattered about a huge world has tapped into that primal human instinct to find the Truth in the natural, in this case digital, world. We will be discussing both the mythology of *Hollow Knight* and how that mythology organically came into being through a determined group of fans.

Reading by Jo Walton

Award-winning author and Mythopoeic Fantasy Award finalist Jo Walton will read from her works and answer questions from the audience.

The Rings of Power Book Club (Part 1):

Seduction, Knowledge, and Metallurgy in the Second Age of Middle-earth

Tim Lenz, Alicia Fox-Lenz, Grace Moone, Pablo Guss (panel)

The upcoming Amazon-produced streaming series *The Rings of Power* represents the most expensive adaptation of Tolkien's Middle-earth to date, and will explore the Second Age, of which Tolkien wrote relatively little. This adaptation has generated massive buzz, both positive and negative, prior to its airing, often centered around issues of race, gender, and diversity. Over the past 5 months, a group of Mythies have gathered periodically on the Mythopoeic Society's Discord server to pore over Tolkien's meager writings about the Second Age, and how this material could be adapted into a live action streaming series. We will revisit some of the recurring themes from our book club meetings; Which Second Age elements and characters likely will/will not be portrayed, depictions of race/culture/religion, origins of histories, descriptions of Sauron's influence in Numenor, and more.

The Rings of Power Book Club (Part 2):

Open Discussion on *The Peoples of Middle-earth: Tar-Elmar*

Tim Lenz, Alicia Fox-Lenz, Grace Moone, Pablo Guss (roundtable)

Participate in or spectate a hybrid in-person/online MythCon edition of 'The Rings of Power Book Club,' where we discuss excerpts from Tolkien's writings on the Second Age of Middle-earth, and how they could relate to the upcoming Amazon streaming series. We will be discussing the following passage: *The History of Middle-earth XII: The Peoples of Middle-earth: Tar-Elmar* (422-427).

Romans as the Alien Other in *Cleopatra in Space*

Carly Maris

Cleopatra in Space, a children's cartoon television series produced by Dreamworks, premiered on NBC's Peacock streaming service in 2020. The show rewrites the story of Cleopatra, the famous Egyptian queen who was the last of the Ptolemaic dynasty. Her military defeat at the Battle of Actium in 31 B.C.E. allowed for Octavian to take control of the territory, which then became a significant province in the Roman empire. The cartoon series introduces Cleopatra as a teenager who finds herself transported 30,000 years into the future to the Nile Galaxy, where cats talk and teenagers attend an academy called P.Y.R.A.M.I.D. In this science fiction setting, ancient themes, stories, and tensions are re-imagined, and we learn that Cleopatra is destined to beat the evil galactic tyrant Octavian and his army of alien robot foot soldiers. Using mythological themes and narrative story arch, *Cleopatra in Space* reframes the historical character of Cleopatra into a science fiction heroine, and simultaneously recasts the traditional heroes of the story—the Romans—into the alien Other. In so doing, *Cleopatra in Space* inverts the Roman-centric perspective that has dominated Western depictions of Cleopatra's story for 2,000 years. This paper focuses specifically on the portrayal of Octavian and his legion of robot aliens, arguing that in reframing these historical figures as the alien Other, *Cleopatra in Space* creates a futuristic Cleopatra mythos that rejects the historical creation and reception of ancient Roman propaganda.

“Something Which Ought to be Done When All Else Fails”:

The Experiential Education of Arthur in *The Once and Future King*

Anne Acker

Critical attention to T. H. White's *The Once and Future King*, particularly the book's description of Arthur's education, has necessarily focused on the political themes in the book. Since the fall of the Iron Curtain, some critics have found those themes outdated, a relic of the bloody wars of the 20th century. In the third decade of the 21st century, it has

become apparent that while fascism and Stalinism went away, they did not go far. The tendencies and tensions within society that made them possible before confronting us once again. With this in mind, it may be helpful to revisit White's work, not so much for the political commentary as for the education described there, to understand how transformation might be read as a metaphor for pedagogy. This paper will focus on the first book, *The Sword in the Stone*. While criticism has tended to focus on how different animals featured in the narrative serve as parables or even satire, I contend that there is an underlying humanism in the story. While Arthur learns from the animals he becomes, the ultimate gain in each adventure comes from inhabiting and then transcending the instincts of each animal. The transformations are challenges, and Arthur succeeds by acting humanly at critical moments. The anthropomorphized animals disguise this lesson, so that the reader is not always aware that they are being confronted at every turn with the question of what it means to be human. As with nearly all versions of Arthurian legend, *The Once and Future King* is ultimately more fatalistic than idealistic, and this represents White's cynical view of the relationships that form between individuals and the institutions that govern Them.

The Space Alien as a Multitude in Latinx Science Fiction

Matthew David Goodwin

One of the central claims of my book *The Latinx Files: Race, Migration, and Space Aliens* is that the cultural figure of the space alien is more fruitfully conceived of as a Multitude rather than an Other. The space alien framed as Other may be helpful in critiquing Anglo American works of science fiction, but it is less useful when it comes to the space alien in Latinx science fiction. This essay will examine a number of works of Latinx science fiction to draw out the details of this claim. I will begin by pointing to the multiplicity of allegories and migrations in the comics of Lalo Alcaraz and the short story "Room for Rent" by Richie Narvaez. Next I will examine Tato Laviera's poem "Puerto Rico's Chupacabras," which uses depictions of the Chupacabras, both fictional and real, to express various political, philosophical, and cultural perspectives about being Puerto Rican. Finally, I will examine Gloria Anzaldúa's use of the space alien as a central metaphor, and in particular, her concept of the alien consciousness, a way of being that is tolerant of ambiguity, contradiction, and perplexity, and that does not think dualistically but rather embraces multiplicity. The essay ends by investigating the political ramifications of the embodiment of the alien consciousness in Latinx science fiction and the further effects of thinking of the space alien as a Multitude.

"Strange Faces, Other Minds":

Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* and the Alien Other

Dr. Rebecca Umland

Encounters with the alien other commonly conjure images from science fiction film and literature—advanced spacecraft, alien species in human form from remote places of the galaxy, or in alternate places either in the subterranean realms or on the planet Earth. Varied as they are, a ubiquitous quality of strangeness accompanies these encounters, from those in nineteenth century writers like Jules Verne and H. G. Wells, through early 20th-century Lovecraft narratives, and in contemporary fiction and film. A writer who may not come immediately to mind is Alfred Lord Tennyson, the poet laureate of England from 1850 until his death in 1892. Tennyson was a visionary poet, a writer who seemed to intuit that the nineteenth century represented a liminal space between a remote, nostalgic past and a future of both undetermined marvels and menaces. Steeped in Celtic lore and intent on composing an epic on the Arthurian Legend, Tennyson also foresaw future space flight, and perhaps also a time in which the world might achieve perfection. This paper focuses on the idea of King Arthur as an alien other in Tennyson's epic poem, *Idylls of the King*, twelve poems first published serially between 1859–1885 and finally as an epic work in its current form. In the first idyll, "The Coming of the King," one version of Arthur's origin is mythopoeic—he is "sent" and not born on "a night when the bounds of heaven and earth were lost," (l. 371) delivered to shore on the ninth wave, from a sky ship "bright with a shining people on the decks" (l. 375). In the final idyll, "The Passing of Arthur," the moribund king boards a ship inhabited by three weeping queens while one sole survivor of Camelot, Bedivere, mourns this loss and anticipates his own alienation: "And I, the last, go forth companionless, / And the days darken round me, and the years, / Among new men, strange faces, other minds" (ll. 404-406). As Arthur's vessel receded into the horizon, "from the great deep to the great deep he goes"

(l. 443), Bedivere heard “faint / As beyond the limit of the world, / . . . Sounds, as if some fair city were one voice / Around a king returning from his wars” (ll. 456-461). “Born before his time” Arthur is a visionary artist, a bringer of the light, different not only in degree but possibly also in kind to other men, as several passages in the Idylls show. What is unusual about the portrayal of the alien other in Tennyson’s text is its medieval setting, the origin and fate of its hero, Arthur, and the strange twilight alienation of Bedivere, his companion. Tennyson was a poet who saw both “fore and aft.” Early in his career he anticipated aircraft travel in “Locksley Hall” (1842); moreover, the strange, almost nihilistic attitude of belatedness expressed by Bedivere in the final idyll is anticipated by that of Ulysses’ men in “The Lotos-Eaters” (1832-1833)—a feeling often expressed in texts of the alien other.

Tolkien’s Monsters: Alien and Inside

John Rosegrant

Monsters are flexible symbols that function as repositories both for our fears of external dangers and our fears of our own unacceptable thoughts and feelings. They thus threaten not only physical death but the death of social meaning and a coherent self. Both in the scholarly “*Beowulf*: The Monsters and the Critics” (“Death comes to the feast, and they say He gibbers; He has no sense of proportion” [19]) and in his fiction Tolkien showed keen awareness of this double threat that monsters bring. Tolkien’s undead—the Nazgûl, the Barrow-Wight, and the corpses of the Dead Marshes— especially exemplify the threat to mind as well as body. It is because imagined monsters were very important to Tolkien personally that he was able to depict them so meaningfully. In Tolkien’s life we see a long history to dark moods, the experience of in-betweenness, and fascination with the two prototypical monsters from *Beowulf*, cannibalistic ogres and dragons. Carpenter dates Tolkien’s despairing moods to the death of his mother at age twelve, but Tolkien’s imaginative investment in monsters before that tragic event suggests that even as a younger child he had been creatively engaging with the realization that “all departs, light and life together,” likely because he had already experienced at age four his father’s death. And in his letters Tolkien referred to *The Lord of the Rings* itself both as exposing his heart and as a monster.

Tolkien’s Undragons: The Winged Steeds of the Ringwraiths

Dr. Romuald I. Lakowski

Contrary to the impression given by the various movie adaptations, the “winged steeds” of the ring wraiths are never portrayed in the *Lord of the Rings* as dragons. The only dragon mentioned in LOTR is the Green Dragon Inn. After the Ringwraiths lose their black horses at the Ford of Bruinen at the end of Book I, when they do return starting at the end Book II, they are always portrayed as mounted on some kind of “winged steed.” In my paper, I will present a close reading of these references in Books II to VI, looking very carefully at the very circumscribed language Tolkien uses to describe them. Lastly, since I am thinking about writing a book on Tolkien’s dragons, I will speculate about how Tolkien’s “undragons” relate to the various types of dragons described in Tolkien’s other stories.

The Transformations of Rabadash

Joe Christopher

“The Transformations of Rabadash” (in other words, on the last chapter of *The Horse and His Boy*). I will argue for the indebtedness of that chapter to the major plot of Apuleius’ *The Golden Ass*. I will cite Sarah Ruden’s translation of *The Golden Ass*, although I also have Robert Graves’ translation.

What if There Isn’t a Train Wreck?:

Surviving Portal Worlds in the Works of Seanan McGuire

Vicki Ronn

Portal fantasies are a common motif in the literature of the fantastic and boarding school novels are stock in trade for British fiction. The Wayward Children series by Seanan McGuire addresses the question, “What happens to the children after they come back through the portal into the real world?” by establishing a boarding school for the returnees, thus combining the two genres. This paper will discuss how McGuire alternates her novellas between portal worlds and the

issues those worlds cause the children who experience them when they return to the everyday. This paper will also focus on the themes of difference and acceptance (or the lack thereof) that permeates each of the books in the series.

A Wrinkle in Fate:

The Mythic Implications of Whatsit, Who, and Which in *A Wrinkle in Time*

Sarah Beach

In Madeline L'Engle's *A Wrinkle in Time*, the presence of the Mmes. Whatsit, Who, and Which seems to invoke the Three Witches in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, but this is a misdirection. In the course of the story, they actually function in a way resembling the Fates of Classical Greek and Roman myth. The key feature of the Classical Fates is that they determine the unchangeable destiny of an individual. L'Engle, as a Christian, believed in change and redemption. So, the "Fates" in her story would have to perform differently than the Classical Fates, if they were to figure in her story at all. In one sense, L'Engle's story presents a Christian redemption of the Fates, in addition to the lessons that Meg learns during the adventure. The purpose of the Classical Fates was shaping the thread of mortal lives, the beginning, middle, and, most particularly, their end. Rarely was that end changeable. Achilles was notable as being given two optional fates: to live gloriously, die young, and have fame forever, or to live a quiet but long life, die old, and be forgotten. He chose glory and fame forever. But this sort of predeterminism does not work for L'Engle. Instead, her Three Ws are present to indicate the start of actions (Whatsit), the meaning of actions (Who), and the completion of either preparation or an actual task (Which). L'Engle's new casting of the chores of the Fates gets played out in how the Three Ws interact with each of the characters. Certainly, their interactions with Meg and Charles Wallace are important. But how they interact with Calvin (surely his name is significant for the Christian L'Engle) and Dr. Murray has equal importance. Certainly, the adventure starts out with the purpose of rescuing Dr. Murray from the IT of Camazotz, but turns into the redemption of Charles Wallace from his surrender to IT. The climax of the story turns on the success of the quest to rescue Dr. Murray and the conjoined loss of Charles Wallace to IT. The point here is that Charles Wallace succumbs to IT because in spite of his powerful intellect, he does not have enough life experience to resist IT. Meg is broken by this loss and needs the comfort and healing brought by Aunt Beast. Her despair at the loss is a residue of the Classical Fates' unchangeable destiny, but Aunt Beast in effect reminds her that she can change things. The lessons of love that she has learned from the Three Ws and also learns from Aunt Beast make the difference. L'Engle's story presents the choice to fight evil, no matter what. She conveys how our fates are truly not predetermined, but rather are shaped by how we choose to respond to the challenges we meet.

Writing Mythopoeia for Social Justice

Rivera Sun (workshop)

From the *Binti Trilogy* to *Broken Earth* to *Fifth Sacred Thing* to some of the solutionary cli-fi short stories, contemporary writers have provided many powerful examples for exploring issues of social justice. In this workshop, our Author Guest of Honor will use writing prompts and activities to lead attendees to explore how mythopoeic writing can change how we think about our world and others around us in powerful and positive ways. Whether you are a writer yourself or a reader eager to encourage better futures for us all, join us in this fun and interactive workshop.

Presenter Bios

Megan Abrahamson (she/her) holds a PhD from the University of Missouri and a MA from the University of New Mexico in English with concentrations in Medieval Literature and Medieval Studies, respectively. She has published “JRR Tolkien, Fanfiction, and the ‘Freedom of the Reader’” in *Mythlore* and continues to be interested in popular culture intersections with medieval literature and culture. She is an English instructor at Central New Mexico Community College, is the editor for *Mythprint*, and was Co-Chair of Mythcon 51 and Mythcon 52 with Leslie A. Donovan.

Anne Acker is a native and lifelong resident of Northeast Tennessee and a graduate of Milligan University and East Tennessee State University. Before completing her graduate degrees, she briefly taught middle and high school English and worked as elementary school librarian for five years. She has a PhD in English from the University of Tennessee with specializations in Early Modern Literature and Rhetoric. Her research interest is the literature of the English Reformation. Anne currently teaches at Tusculum University in Greeneville, TN, where she is the department specialist in British Literature.

Cami Agan is Professor of English at Oklahoma Christian University. She teaches British, World Lit and in the Honors program. Her research focuses primarily on the First Age of Middle-earth, particularly the lost landscape of Beleriand. She's edited the collection *Cities and Strongholds of Middle-earth*, currently in press at Mythopoeic Press, and her chapter on Míriel's Weaving appears in *Loxmeasters and Librarians* (Croft and Fisher, eds).

Sarah Beach My life's path has taken me from Michigan to Texas (Houston and Austin), then to California (Los Angeles), a brief sojourn in Oregon before returning to California for another 2 years, and then hence to Las Vegas, Nevada. Educational pursuits ran from studying English literature at the University of Houston to graduate studies in Medieval English Literature at the University of Texas at Austin. After working in libraries for a few years (in Austin and Los Angeles), I landed a long-running job as a researcher for the quiz show Jeopardy! and after 18 years of that, I flew away into the freelance world of text editing and creative writing.

Craig A. Boyd is Professor of Philosophy and Humanities at Saint Louis University. His professional interests include virtue ethics, natural law morality, the work of Thomas Aquinas, and Tolkien studies. He has published 5 books including *The Virtues: A Very Short Introduction* with Kevin Timpe (Oxford University Press, 2021); *Christian Ethics and Moral Philosophy* (Baker Academic, 2018), *Virtues and their Vices* with Kevin Timpe (Oxford University Press, 2014); and *Visions of Agapé: Problems and Possibilities in Human and Divine Love* (Ashgate, 2008). Recent journal publications on Tolkien include articles in *Christian Scholar's Review*, *The Heythrop Journal*, and *Christianity and Literature*. His forthcoming volume on *The True, the Good, and the Beautiful in Tolkien* will be published with Cambridge University Press.

David Bratman has been an enthusiastic supporter of the Mythopoeic Society and Mythcons since joining in 1975. In addition to his scholarly work, David edited *Mythprint*, the Society's monthly newsletter, from 1980–1995. When David gave up that job, he became the original “SMC” (Steward for Mythopoeic Conferences) 1995–99 and created guidelines that continue to serve us well, decades later. He served as the awards administrator from 1991–99, and has attended every Mythcon since 1976, has chaired twice (1988 and 2007), and worked on at least half a dozen others. He is our Scholar Guest of Honor for Mythcon 52. For more info, see a longer bio for him elsewhere in this program.

Janet Brennan Croft (ORCID 0001-0001-2691-3586) is an Associate University Librarian at the University of Northern Iowa. She is the author of *War in the Works of J.R.R. Tolkien* (Praeger, 2004; winner, Mythopoeic Society Award for Inklings Studies). She has also written on the Peter Jackson Middle-earth films, the Whedonverse, *Orphan Black*, J.K. Rowling, Terry Pratchett, Lois McMaster Bujold, *The Devil Wears Prada*, and other authors, TV shows, and movies, and is editor or co-editor of many collections of literary essays, the most recent being *Loxmeasters and Librarians in Fantasy and Science Fiction: A Gedenkschrift for David Oberhelman*, co-edited with Jason Fisher (Mythopoeic Press, 2021). She edits

the refereed scholarly journal *Mythlore* and is archivist and assistant editor of *Slayage: The International Journal of Buffy+*. You can follow her work on [Academia.edu](https://www.academia.edu).

Joe R. Christopher has twice received awards for books of Mythopoeic Scholarship, in 1976 and 1988. The earlier was for *C. S. Lewis: An Annotated Checklist about Him and Works*, with Joan K. Ostling; and the latter was for a book in the Twayne English Authors series, simply titled *C. S. Lewis*. Joe also has a statuette of a lion—an “Aslan” it was called then—with a label saying it is for the 1987 Mythopoeic Scholarship Award, which is obviously inaccurate; it was supposed to be a statue for the 1988 book, but the instructions were fouled up. Oh well, who else has a statue in his living room of a confused Aslan? (Heresy!)

Journey Cotton is a first year PhD student at the University of Exeter studying English. She received bachelor degrees from Lubbock Christian University in English with an emphasis in Literature and Humanities with an emphasis in Law and a master’s degree in English Literature specialising in the Victorian and Romantic periods at the University of Bristol. Her current field of study considers environmental bioethics as a framework in reading the literature of J. R. R. Tolkien and C. S. Lewis. She is interested in bioethics, ecology, Victorian literature, and the representation of the body in literature.

Julia DaSilva is an M. A. student in the English department at the University of British Columbia. Her work focuses on fantasy & magic systems, religion in fantasy literature, phenomenology and politics of magic, and eco-criticism. She is currently working on developing a conception of fantasy reading as salvaging from what overflows in the dangerous indeterminacy of moments of enchantment, looking in particular at George MacDonald, C. S. Lewis, Ursula K. Le Guin, Philip Pullman, and N. K. Jemisin. Her poetry has appeared in *Eclectica*, *Cathexis*, *Half A Grapefruit*, *High Shelf Press*, *Reckoning*, and *MORIA*.

Jessica Dickinson Goodman is a fantasy and science fiction writer with pieces published in *The Oakland Review* and *Galactic Journey*; she’s been anthologized in *Geek Out*, *Hashtag Queer* and *Imagoes*. In her non-writing life, she’s served as a scheduler to now-U.S. Vice President Senator Kamala D. Harris; is the Board President of the Internet Society: San Francisco Bay Area Chapter; and is one of the youngest women—and only queer woman—ever elected to run an Odd Fellows lodge in the state of California. She graduated from Carnegie Mellon University with a B.S. in Ethics, History, and Public Policy, a minor in Opera, and 3 years of Arabic.

Willow DiPasquale is a Visiting Assistant Professor of Writing, Rhetoric, and Literature at Jefferson University and an adjunct instructor at Arcadia University and Bryn Mawr College. She recently graduated from Drew University’s D.Litt. program, where her dissertation analyzed representations of the environment and environmental ethics in J.R.R. Tolkien’s and Frank Herbert’s mythopoeic fantasy literature. Willow’s research and teaching focus on speculative fiction, ecocriticism, animal studies, medieval bestiaries, and composition.

Leslie A. Donovan is a Professor of the Honors College at the University of New Mexico, in Albuquerque, NM. She is the editor of *Approaches to Teaching Tolkien’s The Lord of the Rings and Other Works* (MLA 2015) and co-editor of *Perilous and Fair: Women in the Works and Life of J. R. R. Tolkien* (with Janet Brennan Croft, Mythopoeic Press, 2015). She is a member of the Mythopoeic Society’s Council of Stewards and Co-Chair of Mythcon 52.

Ben Dressler is the Digitization Technician for the Al Harris Library at Southwestern Oklahoma State University. He works under the supervision of Phillip Fitzsimmons. He is an undergraduate at SWOSU studying Environmental and Organismal Biology.

Hadas Elber-Aviram is an Adjunct Assistant Professor at the University of Notre Dame’s London Global Gateway. She is the author of *Fairy Tales of London: British Urban Fantasy, 1840 to the Present* (Bloomsbury, 2021), which charts the development of fantastical London literature across the fictions of Charles Dickens, H. G. Wells, George Orwell, Mervyn Peake, Michael Moorcock, M. John Harrison, Neil Gaiman, and China Miéville, examining their fascination with the materiality of the city, their belief in the fantasy genre as an idiom that can affect social change, and their

conviction that for good or ill, the future of humanity lies in the metropolis. Hadas has published articles and chapters (peer-reviewed) on topics ranging from Dickens's influence on Mervyn Peake and China Miéville, to H. G. Wells's fantastical London, to the representation of vampires in science fiction, to the affiliations between urban archaeology and urban fantasy, to post-Brexit science fiction.

Phillip Fitzsimmons is the Reference and Digitization Librarian at Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford, Oklahoma. He is the Archivist for the Mythopoeic Society and administrator of the SWOSU Digital Commons, where digital versions of the Mythopoeic Society publications may be read for free at dc.swosu.edu/mythsoc. His research interests include the works of J. R. R. Tolkien, Owen Barfield, the Inklings, Joseph Campbell, digital services for academic libraries with an emphasis on institutional repository administration, and library reference services. He is an official adviser to the Owen Barfield Literary Estate.

Alicia Fox-Lenz is an independent scholar interested in studying Tolkien through a Cultural Studies lens and expanding the mantle of mythopoeic literature to interactive narrative platforms. More specifically, her work examines the applicability of Tolkien to a modern audience through reception, adaptation, and juxtaposition to pop culture media, as well as contextualizing the Legend of Zelda franchise as a work of mythopoeia. She has been published in *Critical Insights: The Hobbit*, "Something Has Gone Crack": *New Perspectives on J.R.R. Tolkien in the Great War*, *Mythopoeic Narrative in The Legend of Zelda*, and is currently editing a collection tentatively titled "I'm Going on an Adventure": *Seeking Tolkien's Influence in Game Design and Culture*.

Victoria Gaydosik retired from the Language and Literature Department at Southwestern Oklahoma State University after teaching in higher education for 32 years. She is the author of *The Facts on File Companion to the British Novel, Volume 2: The Twentieth Century*; all the articles on George Eliot/Mary Ann Evans and her works in volume 1 of the same book; and several other articles. Since 2020, Victoria has been the editor of *The Mythic Circle*, the creative writing journal of the Mythopoeic Society, and co-chaired the Mythopoeic Society's first annual Online Midwinter Seminar in February 2022.

Matthew David Goodwin is an Assistant Professor in the Chicana/o Studies Department at the University of New Mexico. His research is centered on Chicana/Latina speculative fiction, in particular how Chicana/Latina writers are using science fiction, fantasy, and digital culture to explore migration. His study *The Latinx Files: Race, Migration, and Space Aliens* was released through Rutgers University Press in 2021. His research is intertwined with work as an editor and translator of fiction anthologies. He is the editor of *Latinx Rising: An Anthology of Latinx Science Fiction and Fantasy* and the co-editor of the collection *Speculative Fiction for Dreamers* (both with Ohio State University Press), latinxarchive.com.

Pablo Guss is a graduate of the University of New Mexico, now teaching high school physics. In the past, he's been a Mythcon panelist for "The Single Leaf Project: Tolkien in Birmingham" and "Protecting the Shire: A Hobbit Society's Journey at the University of New Mexico."

Scott Hodgman is a native of Northern California transplanted to the South. With an undergraduate degree in marine engineering, he's made seven ocean crossings, sailed the Straights of Magellan, and transited the Suez Canal. A graduate student at Signum University, Hodgman is fascinated by Tolkien's legendarium as an operative mythology and Tolkien's use of alliterative verse. An engineer turned strategist for the high tech industry, graduate studies at Signum are the foundation for his next career. Married and father of two precocious children, he is raising another generation of language enthusiasts and Tolkien lovers.

Romuald I. Lakowski is a member of the English Department at MacEwan University in Edmonton, Canada. He has taught courses on Shakespeare, Renaissance and Medieval Literature, Medieval Drama, History of the English Language, Children's Literature, Tolkien, and a Survey of British Literature, as well as introductory Literature and Composition courses. He has also taught 400-level seminars on Edmund Spenser, Early Modern Utopias and Medieval Travel Literature, J.R.R. Tolkien, and Renaissance English Poetry. He has published several book chapters, articles and reviews

in *Moreana*, *Early Modern Literary Studies*, *Renaissance Forum*, *Disputatio*, *Ben Jonson Review*, *The Sixteenth Century Journal* and *Mythlore*. His current research interests include the geographical background to Thomas More's Utopia and the works of J.R.R. Tolkien.

Amber Lehning is a dedicated mythologist and ecocritic with a broad intellectual background, a diverse professional history courtesy of a long career as a military officer, and a PhD in the interdisciplinary field of Mythological Studies. Her first book, *The Map of Wilderland: Ecocritical Reflections on Tolkien's Myth of Wilderness*, is now available from the Kent State University Press. Although she grew up in Western New York near Buffalo, she currently enjoys the considerably more hospitable weather of her northern San Diego county home in Southern California.

Tim Lenz is the Online Events Administrator of the Mythopoeic Society, a lifelong geek, and experienced pop culture podcast co-host. He attended his first Mythcon in 2018, and immediately gained an appreciation for its unique blend of academics, fannish content, camaraderie, and goblin head-smashing. Tim has a PhD in biochemistry from Georgia Tech, but has also dabbled in media studies—his undergraduate thesis at McMaster University explored Cold War science fiction as a reflection of the public consciousness. He is also co-host of a 'Jeopardy!-famous' annual Middle-earth Movie Marathon.

Chris Loughlin is a historian of modern Britain and Ireland. He was employed as lecturer in history at Newcastle University, 2018-21, and obtained his training at Queen's University Belfast. His first monograph was published in 2018, *Labour and the Politics of Disloyalty in Belfast, 1921-39*. He has also published work on civil rights, loyalty and the foundation of Northern Ireland, gender, sexualities, and industrial relations. His critical science fiction studies—on power and the dialectics of twentieth century science fiction and Celtic Futurism—were recently featured in the *Routledge Handbook of Literature and Class* and *SFRA Review*.

Carly Maris received her PhD in Ancient History at UC Riverside in 2019. She is currently the Stepsay Postdoctoral Candidate in Classics at San Diego State University, where she will be teaching World Mythology in Fall 2022. Her research interests include Cleopatra, ancient parades, and Public Humanities. She is currently working on a podcast about Cleopatra that has a tentative release date of 2023, as well as an academic monograph on the history of imperial parades in antiquity.

Lynn Maudlin joined the Mythopoeic Society in 1982, a few months before her first Mythcon, and has only missed two conferences since. She joined the Council as Publicity Steward in 1984 and co-founded The Mythic Circle with Sherwood Smith in 1987; she then took on the role of membership steward. Lynn was the North American Booking Officer for the Tolkien Centenary Celebration, co-sponsored with The Tolkien Society in Oxford, from 1988 through the conference in 1992. She took a break from the Council in the mid 1990s for about a decade, returning to the Council in late 2005, serving since that time as the Steward for Mythopoeic Conferences.

Mark Miner has been reciting traditional poetry (Homer, Vergil, *Beowulf*, *Sir Gawain*, as well as Celtic and Norse material) since the 1990s. At first it was a long slog to bring the dead tongues and dead characters back to life, but with each show it gets easier and easier. In the Welsh bardic tradition, performances always involved local voices in a bardic circle. Future projects include a tri-lingual edition of the *Iliad* in Greek, English and Japanese, and a recording of Plato's Phaedros in Greek and English. You haven't lived until you've heard Achilles and Agamemnon bellowing at each other in Nihongo. For *Sir Gawain*, I'm very much indebted to the recordings of Jess Bessinger and Marie Borroff.

Grace Moone (she/her) is a writer, educator and activist. She holds an MEd in Educational Policy and Leadership from Marquette University as well as a BA from Rockford University in History and Theatre, and has been published in *Stories of High Falls* and *Insight Out*. She serves on the Steering Committee for Bi+ Pride Milwaukee, collects books like Smaug collects gems and gold, and has a collection totaling somewhere between the libraries of Frederick Douglass and George Lucas. Her non-literary hobbies include quilting and fiber arts, gardening, and almost any craft she can get her hands on.

Berni Phillips is happily retired after more than 40 years in the semiconductor industry. If this seems odd for someone with a music degree, it's because by the time she realized she was never going to be good enough to be an opera singer, she also realized she did not want that life. In retirement, she has taken up the violin again. She lives in domestic bliss with her husband, David Bratman, and their two cats.

Eric Rauscher is a retired general contractor who has been a member of the Mythopoeic Society for 45 years. He has a keen interest in Charles Williams.

Sultana Raza, an Independent Researcher, has an MA in English Literature. She's presented numerous papers on Fantasy (mainly Tolkien) at the Popular Culture Association (2018), NeMLA (2018), Oxonmoot (2018, 2019, 2020, and 2021), TS Seminars (2008, 2018, & 2021), World Con (2019), and CoNZeland (2020), in future at Once and Future Fantasies Glasgow July 2022. She's also presented papers on Romanticism (Keats) in the USA, the UK, France, Greece, and Norway. She's published essays on Tolkien (*Vector*, *Beyond Bree*, etc.) and on Keats. Her 100+ articles have appeared in English and French. Of Indian origin, her poems/fiction have appeared in 100+ journals. with SFF work in *Amon Hen*, *Entropy*, *Columbia Journal*, *Star*line*, *Bewildering Stories*, *spillwords*, *Unlikely Stories Mark V*, *Blaze Vox*, *The World of Myth*, *inspired*, *Focus (BSFA)*, *file770*, *Galaxy#2*, *Galaxy#4*, *Musing on Muses Anthology*, and *Antipodean SF*.

Robin Anne Reid, PhD, was a professor in the Department of Literature and Languages at Texas A&M University-Commerce for twenty-seven years before retiring in May 2020 to pursue scholarship as an independent scholar. She co-directed two N.E.H. Tolkien Institutes for School Teachers on Teaching Tolkien with Dr. Judy Ann Ford, History, A&M-Commerce. Her scholarship is shaped by gender, queer, and critical race theories. Her current projects include two anthologies. The first is co-edited with Christopher Vaccaro and Stephen Yandell, titled "*We Could Do With a Bit More Queerness in These Parts*": *Tolkien's Queer Legendarium*, and the second is *Race, Racisms, and Racists: Essays on J. R. R. Tolkien's Legendarium, Adaptations, and Readers*, under contract with McFarland.

Vicki Ronn is an Associate Professor of English at Friends University. Her scholarly interests include the depiction of old women in fantasy literature, the fiber arts and their connection to literature, and Asian fantasy in both television and written genres. She has been a member of the Mythopoeic Society for several years and has served as Awards Steward until this year. She has taught classes on various topics including *The Lord of the Rings*, graphic novels, mythology, and U.S. Women's History and Literature.

John Rosegrant has loved and studied the works of Tolkien since *The Hobbit* was read to him when he was six years old. He grew up to be a psychoanalyst in private practice who has helped adults, teens, and children find meaning in the face of disillusionment. He has published and presented numerous papers on topics including fairy tales, fantasy, and Tolkien, most recently presenting "On Foxes and Dancing Bears" at the International Conference on Medieval Studies. He is also the author of *The Gates of Inland* Young Adult Fantasy series. John's book *Tolkien, Enchantment, and Loss: Steps on the Developmental Journey* was published by Kent State University Press earlier this year.

Lawrence Santiago has been a registered nurse for 25 years and has taught nursing at various levels for 18 years. He loves to read and decided to seek an MA in English. He recently completed a course that focused on Tolkien's *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. He enjoys writing pieces that combine his expertise in nursing with relevant issues in literature.

Lee Speth is a 50-year member of the Mythopoeic Society (joined in 1972), and started serving on the Council in 1979 as the manager of the Orders Department and is the longest-serving Steward (he also has a great memory, for which we are all thankful!). Lee has attended all but three Mythcons since 1981, greeting new and returning members with equal enthusiasm as he sits at the Society table in the dealers' room. He is also the long-time moderator of the Society discussion group Mydgard, currently on hiatus in the pandemic.

Rob Stauffer is an Associate Professor of English specializing in medieval and Renaissance studies at Dominican University in Orangeburg, New York. Before his days in academics, he freelanced for several science-fiction and fantasy

publishers (Tor and Del Rey, in particular) and read slush for Omni Magazine's fiction editor, Ellen Datlow. McFarland Press released his most recent book in November 2021 (with two co-authors) called *Speculative Modernism: How Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror Conceived the Twentieth Century*. He was also the co-editor and contributor to *A Companion to Marguerite Porete and The Mirror of Simple Souls* for Brill publishers which came out in 2017. Currently, he is working on a book about early-twentieth century fantasy and mysticism. He lives on Long Island, NY, with his wife Becky Maines and a surprising number of cats.

Jana Stone (she/hers) is a scientist by training, having earned a Ph.D. in Molecular Biology from UNC. She now teaches career and professional development programs by day. By night, she tends to fall down rabbit holes with myriad hobbies and crafty projects. During the unprecedented times, she has been learning digital art and calligraphy—coronalligraphy, if you will.

Rivera Sun has written numerous books and novels, including *The Dandelion Insurrection*, and the award-winning Ari Ara Series. She is a nationwide trainer in strategy for nonviolent movements, the editor of Nonviolence News, and works with many peace and justice organizations. She is the Author Guest of Honor for Mythcon 52. For more info, see a longer bio for her elsewhere in this program or visit riverasun.com.

Michael A. Torregrossa works as an adjunct instructor in English in both Rhode Island and Massachusetts. His research focuses on adaptations of the Arthurian legends in popular culture, especially as it relates to the character of Merlin on screen. Michael has published two essays on this topic and a filmography, and his ongoing project (including work presented at the Online Midwinter Seminar) explores how creators have approached Merlin's origins. In addition to this work, Michael is founder of both The Alliance for the Promotion of Research on the Matter of Britain and The Association for the Advancement of Scholarship and Teaching of the Medieval in Popular Culture, and he also serves as editor for these organizations' various blogs and moderator of their discussion lists.

Rebecca Umland is a professor of English at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. She authored *Outlaw Heroes as Liminal Figures of Film and Television*, along with book chapters and articles on Arthurian Legend, cinema and world and British literature. With Samuel Umland she coauthored *Donald Cammell: A Life on the Wild Side* and *The Use of Arthurian Legend in Hollywood Film: From Connecticut Yankees to Fisher Kings*.

Daniel Viorica is a writer from Cedar Crest, New Mexico. Fantasy has been important to him since he was young, so he is very excited to participate in this year's MythCon. He just finished the first year of his undergraduate degree in Comparative Literature at Princeton University and enjoys writing fiction and poetry.

Jo Walton has published many fantasy and speculative fiction novels, many of which have won major awards. Her novel *Tooth and Claw* won a World Fantasy Award, and she won both a Nebula and Hugo award for *Among Others*. She won the Mythopoeic Fantasy Award for *Lifelode*, and was a finalist for our Mythopoeic Fantasy Award four other times. She was our Mythcon 46 Author Guest of Honor in 2015 at Colorado Springs, CO.

Joseph Rex Young lives in Dunedin, New Zealand, where he pursues his research interests in the intellectual history and theoretical structure of modern fantasy literature. He sees fantasy as the modern successor of the Romantic movement, measuring and accentuating the mundane elements of narrative in relation to imponderable literary creations, a broad interpretation of J.R.R. Tolkien's notion of formalised Recovery. He has published articles on this matter in various journals, including *Mythlore*, *The Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts*, *Gramarye* and *Studies in the Fantastic*, and is also the author of the book *George R.R. Martin and the Fantasy Form* (Routledge, 2019).

2022 Mythopoeic Award Finalists

Mythopoeic Fantasy Award for Adult Literature

Katherine Addison, *The Witness for the Dead* (Tor, 2021)
Ryka Aoki, *Light from Uncommon Stars* (Tor Books, 2021)
P. Djèlí Clark, *A Master of Djinn* (Tordotcom, 2021)
Susanna Clarke, *Piranesi* (Bloomsbury, 2020)
Garth Nix, *Terciel and Elinor* (Katherine Tegen Books, 2021)
Jo Walton, *Or What You Will* (Tor, 2020)

Mythopoeic Fantasy Award for Children's Literature

Sayantani DasGupta, *The Kiranmala and the Kingdom Beyond trilogy* (Scholastic, 2018–2020)
Regina M. Hansen, *The Coming Storm* (Athenium, 2021)
Lori M. Lee, *Pahua and the Soul Stealer* (Rick Riordan Presents, 2021)
Eden Royce, *Root Magic* (Walden Pond Press, 2021)

Mythopoeic Scholarship Award in Inklings Studies

Paul S. Fiddes, *Charles Williams and C. S. Lewis: Friends in Co-inherence* (Oxford UP, 2021)
John Garth, *The Worlds of J.R.R. Tolkien: The Places that Inspired Middle-earth* (Princeton UP, 2020)
Peter Grybauskas, *A Sense of Tales Untold: Exploring the Edges of Tolkien's Literary Canvas* (Kent State UP, 2021)
Holly Ordway, *Tolkien's Modern Reading: Middle-earth Beyond the Middle Ages* (Word on Fire Academic, 2021)

Mythopoeic Scholarship Award in Myth and Fantasy Studies

Philip Ball, *The Modern Myths: Adventures in the Machinery of the Popular Imagination* (U of Chicago P, 2021)
Hadas Elber-Aviram, *Fairy Tales of London: British Urban Fantasy, 1840 to the Present* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2021)
Daniel Ogden, *The Dragon in the West: From Ancient Myth to Modern Legend* (Oxford UP, 2021)
Ebony Elizabeth Thomas, *The Dark Fantastic: Race and the Imagination from Harry Potter to The Hunger Games* (New York UP, 2019)
Joseph Rex Young, *George R. R. Martin and the Fantasy Form* (Routledge, 2019)

The Mythopoeic Fantasy Award for Adult Literature is given to the fantasy novel, multi-volume, or single-author story collection for adults published during 2021 that best exemplifies the spirit of the Inklings. Books are eligible for two years after publication if not selected as a finalist during the first year of eligibility. Books from a series are eligible if they stand on their own; otherwise, the series becomes eligible the year its final volume appears. The Mythopoeic Fantasy Award for Children's Literature honors books for beginning readers to age thirteen, in the tradition of *The Hobbit* or *The Chronicles of Narnia*. Rules for eligibility are otherwise the same as for the Adult literature award. The question of which award a borderline book is best suited for will be decided by consensus of the committees. Books for mature "Young Adults" may be moved to the Adult literature category. The Mythopoeic Scholarship Award in Inklings Studies is given to books on Tolkien, Lewis, and/or Williams that make significant contributions to Inklings scholarship. For this award, books first published during the last three years (2019–2021) are eligible, including finalists for previous years. The Mythopoeic Scholarship Award in Myth and Fantasy Studies is given to scholarly books on other specific authors in the Inklings tradition, or to more general works on the genres of myth and fantasy. The period of eligibility is three years, as for the Inklings Studies award.

The winners of this year's awards will be announced during the banquet at Mythcon 52, July 31 and livestreamed to virtual attendees. A complete list of Mythopoeic Award winners is available on the Society web site: www.mythsoc.org/awards. The finalists for the literature awards, text of recent acceptance speeches, and selected book reviews are also listed in this on-line section. For more information about the Mythopoeic Awards, please contact the Awards Administrator: Dennis Wise, awards@mythsoc.org.

Closing Ceremonies Songs

The Chorea Magna: The Mythopoeic Society anthem

Music: *Simple Gifts/Lord of the Dance*

The Dance is the singing of the stars at their birth,
The Dance is a tree with its roots in utmost earth,
The Dance is the gamboling of balls in a game,
With their source a hand, and their end the same.

Chorus:

Dare, then, the measure of the Dance,
Follow the Fool in his reckless fall,
In his madness, joy, his destiny in chance,
For all luck is good and the Naught is all!

The Dance knows the wounding that the earth cannot heal,
The Dance knows the weight and the flaming of the wheel,
The Dance knows the binding to the stake torched at dawn—
But the Dancers, stilled, still go dancing on.

Chorus:

Dare, then, the measure of the Dance,
Follow the Fool in his reckless fall,
In his madness, joy, his destiny in chance,
For all luck is good and the Naught is all!

The Dance is a Lion and a Child locked in play,
The Dance is a feast on a royal wedding day,
The Dance is a city where the time-scattered meet,
And the Glory blazes in each complete.

Chorus:

Dare, then, the measure of the Dance,
Follow the Fool in his reckless fall,
In his madness, joy, his destiny in chance,
For all luck is good and the Naught is all!

The Baby and The Bird (© 1976 by Diana L. Paxson)

Verses

Old Rome had many taverns
 Devoted to the vine,
 Where Ovid pledged each new love
 In red Falernian wine;
 Catullus, shamed by Lesbia,
 Poured out his grief in verse;
 Apuleus noted follies,
 And pondered which was worse.

The company was lively
 In Soutwark's Tabard Inn,
 When Chaucer and the Pilgrims
 Were telling tales within,
 And on the Canterbury road
 They took that April day,
 And at the other hostels
 Where they stayed upon their way.

When Villon, gutter-poet,
 Reeled through the Paris night,
 Drunk on verse and hypocras
 And looking for a fight,
 The Pomme de Pin, the Cheval Blanc
 All welcomed him, and more,
 With wine at every table
 And doxies at each door.

Of all the City's taverns,
 When Bess was England's Queen,
 The Mermaid, undisputed, ruled
 The literary scene.
 Each Global play was played again
 And christened in brown ale,
 When Shakespeare, or Ben Jonson,
 Stood up to tell the tale.

Augustan wits made merry
 At London's Cheshire Cheese—
 The topic was no matter,
 So that the manner please—
 Be it Love or Politicks,
 'Twas scandalous, I've heard,
 And Johnson had his Boswell
 To write down every word.

They sing of famous taverns,
 But considering them all,
 The one where I had rather
 Been a fly upon the wall,
 Would be the Inn where
 Tolkien, Lewis, Williams too,
 Met with the other Inklings
 Asking, "Who has something new?"

Chorus

*But the place that draws me ever
 When my fancy's running wild,
 Is a little pub in Oxford
 Called The Eagle and the Child,
 The Eagle and the Child, oh,
 Or else, as I have heard
 Its regulars all called it—
 The Baby and the Bird!*

The Baby and the Bird

Diana L. Paxson

♩ = 100

Verse

1. Old Rome had man - y tav - erns — de - vot - ed to the vine, Where Ov - id pledged each new love — in
 2. The com - pan - y was live - ly — in South - wark's Ta - bard Inn, When Chau - cer and the Pil - grims — were
 3. When Vil - lon, gut - ter - po - et, — reeled through the Par - is night, Drunk on verse and hip - po - cras and
 4. Of all the Cit - y's tav - erns, — when Bess was Eng - land's Queen, The Mer - maid, un - dis - put - ed, ruled the
 5. Au - gus - tan wits made mer - ry — at Lon - don's Che - shire Cheese — The top - ic was no mat - ter, — so
 6. They sing of fa - mous tav - erns, but con - sid - er - ing them all, The one where I had rath - er been a

red Fa - ler - nian wine; Ca - tul - lus, shamed by Les - bi - a, poured
 tel - ling tales with - in, And at the oth - er hos - tels where they stayed up - on their way.
 look - ing for a fight, The Pomme de Pin, the Che - val Blanc, all
 lit - e - rar - y scene. Each Glo - bal play was played a - gain and
 that the man - ner please — Be it Love or Pol - i - ticks, 'twas
 fly up - on the wall, Would be the Inn where Tol - ki - en, —

out his grief in verse; Ap - u - leius no - ted fol - lies, — and pon - dered which was worse.
 took that A - pril day, And at the oth - er hos - tels where they stayed up - on their way.
 wel - comed him, and more, With wine at ev - 'ry ta - ble — and dox - ies at each door.
 christ - ened in brown ale, When Shake - speare, or Ben Jon - son, — stood up to tell the tale.
 scan - da - lous, I've heard, And John - son had his Bos - well — to write down ev - 'ry word.
 Le - wis, Wil - liams too, Met with the oth - er Ink - lings ask - ing, "Who has some - thing new?"

Chorus

But the place that draws me ev - er When my fan - cy's run - ning wild, Is a
 lit - tle pub in Ox - ford called The Ea - gle and the Child, The Ea - gle and the Child, oh, or
 else, as I have heard Its reg - u - lars all called it — The Ba - by and the Bird!

Text and tune © 1976 by Diane L. Paxson

Mythcon Policies

COVID-19 Safety Policy

The Mythcon 52 organizing committee is taking the precautions outlined below to ensure the safest possible environment for our presenters, attendees, and local staff (at the hotel, school, and restaurant we will use). In Bernalillo county, where Albuquerque is located, **82.8% of adult residents have completed the primary series of vaccinations** (as of 7/19/22).

Only in the event of an unavoidable circumstance (such as a ban of all gatherings of over a certain number) would we consider canceling Mythcon 52, so you can rest assured we are going forward.

However, participating in any kind of gathering poses some degree of risk of infection. Beyond the requirements outlined here, participants are encouraged to follow their own risk-comfort level when choosing among events to attend. The Mythopoeic Society accepts no responsibility for any spread of COVID-19 or any other communicable health risk as part of travel to, from, or participation in Mythcon 52.

Requirements

Proof of Vaccination or Negative COVID Tests will be required

In line with many Federal and State job requirements, all conference participants will be required to show proof of COVID-19 vaccination or negative PCR test within the previous 72 hours to receive a conference badge (nametag). Proof of vaccination must be for fully-vaccinated status, and we will follow the CDC's definition of "**fully vaccinated**," which is currently two weeks after the second dose of a 2-dose series or two weeks after a one-dose series. Booster shots are recommended if available to attendees, but are not required, unless the CDC updates their definition of fully vaccinated to include them before July 1, in which case they will be required.

Vaccination proof may be presented as a hard copy original, photocopy, or digital copy (picture) of an official, government-issued vaccination card. For U.S. citizens, we will accept the three vaccinations currently recommended by the CDC (Pfizer, Moderna, or Johnson & Johnson). For international attendees, vaccinations approved by the CDC (such as Astra-Zeneca or Covaxin) or an official government-issued vaccination record from another country will be accepted.

Negative PCR test results may be presented in hard copy original, photocopy, or digital copy (picture) format, but the date of the test must be clearly visible (tested within 72 hours of check-in) and results must be displayed in English.

Badges

A conference badge (nametag) will be given to participants at check-in, only upon providing proof of vaccination or negative PCR test. Conference badges are required to be worn by participants in all conference spaces and during all regularly scheduled conference activities. Attendees not displaying their badge will be asked to leave conference spaces and retrieve their badge before rejoining—even if they are presenting in the session. Attendees who lose their badge may receive a replacement from the registration desk, but will be required to again show proof of vaccination or negative PCR test taken within the previous 72 hours.

The registration table will have optional badge aids that participants may use to visually indicate information such as level of comfort with social distancing (i.e., red to indicate discomfort with close proximity and unmasking).

Masks

All conference participants will be required to wear masks indoors that fully cover the mouth and nose during all presentations and panels, unless actively eating or drinking. We can't promise other guests at the hotel or school will always be masked, but only registered attendees will be allowed in conference rooms and programming. Masks are highly encouraged but not required during all special programming (where food and drink are involved).

While actively presenting, speakers are encouraged but not required to mask. This is because masks can inhibit the ability for attendees to hear speakers. We have microphones available to combat this issue for speakers who prefer to stay masked indoors.

Some of our events involve consuming food and drink in close proximity to others, such as complimentary hotel breakfasts (indoors), our welcome reception, and Sunday banquet. We encourage members to engage with these parts of Mythcon at their own comfort level, knowing that masking requirements cannot reasonably be enforced outside of programming.

To mitigate risk of spread, shared meals provided by the conference will be offered outdoors whenever possible:

- Green Jeans, the nearby eatery where participants are invited to have meals, has plenty of (shaded) outdoor seating. The Welcome Reception will be held here.
- The banquet will be hosted by The Daily Grind, another nearby restaurant with outdoor seating and good ventilation, so that participants can feel comfortable enjoying a meal in a group setting.

The Grab and Go Hospitality will have snacks for members to take to their own rooms, outdoors, or wherever they feel safe gathering in smaller groups, but please respect posted signage about masking within this space.

Attendees should, as always, decide for themselves what risks they feel comfortable with taking, and avoid or limit time spent at parts of programming that involve food and drink according to their own risk-comfort level.

Other Encouraged Safety Measures

As much as possible, the following safety measures will be made available and strongly encouraged. Be aware that sometimes limitations of space, weather, or people nearby not associated with Mythcon may make such safety measures difficult, or even impossible, to fully follow. While we will not require or enforce these measures, we ask that all participants do their best to respect these measures.

- Chairs spread out in meeting and session rooms.
- 6 feet of social distance between people in lines.
- Different types of visual aids available at the registration table symbolizing our social distance comfort level to affix to badges.
- Sanitizing materials will be in all spaces.

Refusal or Inability to Comply

Participants who will not be able or willing to meet the vaccination or negative test requirement may request a full refund of registration fee or may convert their registration to virtual as late as July 28, 2022, or with chair or co-chair approval.

Participants who arrive at the conference and decline to show either proof of vaccination or negative test result at check-in will not be allowed admission to the conference.

We hope participants will consider these established rules to be a way to help protect the health and safety of our fellowship of Mythies, and comply with them joyfully. Participants who refuse to comply with indoor masking rules will be considered in violation of the conference code of conduct, and will be asked to comply or leave the space.

If You Test Positive for COVID, or Are Feeling Ill

If you test positive for COVID in the days leading up to the conference, we still will welcome you as long as you are able to end isolation based on the [CDC guidelines](#).

If your PCR test for the start of the conference comes back positive, we regret that we cannot give you your badge and allow you into conference spaces, and you should [follow CDC guidelines](#) to determine your isolation period (though the Society cannot police this).

If you feel ill, we will have rapid tests available at the Registration desk. If you test positive from one of these tests during the conference, we regret that we can no longer allow you into conference spaces going forward, and you should **follow CDC guidelines** for quarantining.

Any members who test positive for COVID during the conference will be issued a partial refund that converts their membership to virtual. Virtual and livestreamed presentations can be viewed from hotel wifi on a personal electronic device that is Zoom-capable, such as a laptop, tablet, or smart phone.

Anyone quarantining in the hotel should alert chair@mythcon.org and co-chair@mythcon.org so that we can make sure you have what you need.

Refund Policy

Anyone may request a full registration refund at any time before the start of the conference if Mythcon policy changes or the state of the world oversteps anyone's personal comfort level—or if you test positive for COVID and cannot attend. The Mythopoeic Society is not responsible for any charges incurred as the result of cancellations of anything else such as transportation or hotels. Everyone must accept a certain amount of personal risk by opting to gather in these times, even with the most rigorous safety policies in place. We hope that participants who are dissatisfied either by the stringency or the leniency of these safety requirements will participate in Mythcon 52's virtual option.

Community Guidelines

1. Be Respectful and Kind

The Mythopoeic Society seeks to create a welcoming environment and to make sure everyone feels safe.

We encourage respectful disagreement or critique in good faith. If you disagree with someone or something, you are expected to handle the disagreement in a mature manner, and consider the impact of your words on a semi-public audience.

Treat everyone with respect especially while debating. Tolkien and Lewis are dead and Frodo and Aslan are fictional characters, but the members of the Society and people interacting with the Society are real (i.e., do not cause real harm over fictional characters).

1.1 Adhere to the COVID-19 Policy set for Mythcon 52

Part of being respectful and kind at this conference in particular will be adhering to the **COVID-19 Safety Policy** set in place and revised as of 5/7/22. Please consider respect and kindness as the basis for which you adhere to this policy. For things like mask wearing, the Three Strike Rule may apply (see Section 5).

2. Help Stewards, Moderators, Conference Committee Members, and Admins on Social Media

The Society is governed by a small group of Stewards, and our online presences are moderated by a small group of volunteers. Please be patient with all of them. Their job is to keep our social media spaces in order and to facilitate discussion among members. In order for moderators to be able to do their jobs, it is imperative that you do not use any social media blocking feature that limits our moderation team's ability to do their job. Anyone found in violation of this rule may be kicked out of the social media space in question (Facebook Group, Discord Server, etc.).

3. Share Material Only with Permission

This is our space, and we want to keep it semi-private and safe for our members, their families, their images, ideas, and intellectual property. Please obtain explicit permission before sharing images and ideas to social media, where we invite you to tag our social media. Do not photograph or screenshot and share anything from our online or in-person events without explicit permission from all those being copied.

4. Harassment is Not Allowed

Bullying or harassment of any kind, whether in person or on social media, isn't allowed in the Mythopoeic Society.

Harassment includes: Verbal or written comments or displayed images that harmfully reinforce structures of oppression (related to gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, age, religion, geographic origin, or class); deliberate intimidation; stalking; body policing (including gender policing in all bathrooms); unwelcome photography or recording; sustained disruption of talks or other events; inappropriate physical contact; and unwelcome sexual attention.

Participants who have been asked to stop harassing behavior by anyone are expected to comply immediately. The weaponization of this code to deride, silence, and police others will be considered a violation of this policy.

5. Three Strike Rule

Each group member, whether a dues-paying Mythopoeic Society member or just a participant in a Mythopoeic sponsored space or event, is allowed two warnings for rule violations before they will be asked to leave the group or event. These may come as verbal warnings in person, or deleted posts and comments, or temporary muting on social media. For severe transgressions (e.g., threats of personal harm), Stewards reserve the right to skip warnings and proceed straight to blocking, kicking out, banning, or otherwise removing the offending participant from our sponsored space or event. This power extends to the Moderators and Hosts in Zoom, Administrators and Moderators of our social media spaces, and to Committee Organizers of in-person conferences. Members who violate these rules on one platform may automatically be banned from other platforms.

Bans from social media and other permanent removal from Society spaces must be reported to and approved by Mythopoeic Society Stewards. (See section 7.)

6. Reporting

Moderators and Stewards cannot possibly watch everything all the time. If you believe someone is violating the Mythsoc Community Guidelines, or if you spot what you think is harassment of others, please contact the Moderators or Stewards.

Members can expect their concerns to be handled sensitively and investigated with all possible confidentiality and fairness to the accused and accuser. Submitting screenshots of conversations to Moderators or Stewards privately shall not be considered a violation of the resharing Rule 3. How the incident is dealt with is up to the deciding Moderators, Chairs, and/or Stewards.

If rule violation occurs at Mythcon: Report to the Mythcon Chair, organizing committee member, or any Steward.

7. Consequences of Rule Violation

Repeated or egregious violations of these rules in online discussion or in person will have consequences as determined by the Stewards, up to and including possible expulsion from membership of the Society. Such cases must be reported to or recorded by the Mythopoeic Society Stewards in writing and a determination approved by a simple majority of the Stewards. Consequences may be determined by the Mythsoc Stewards, but may include: temporary or lifetime ban from Mythopoeic Society membership, temporary or lifetime ban from participation in events and social media presences, public censure, or other consequences.

A member who has been removed from the Society will be refunded their Society membership, but conference (Mythcon or OMS) registration may be forfeit depending on the situation.

Members may appeal their removal from the Society in writing addressed to any Steward. Appeals will be presented and decided upon at the next quarterly Steward meeting.

Registered Attendees (as of 7/25/22; virtual registrants marked by *)

Abrahamson, Bethany
Abrahamson, Megan
Acker, Anne*
Agan, Cami
Alexander, Edward
Allen, Moses
Anderson, Chris
Aoki, Ryka*
Beach, Sarah
Bellum, Daniel
Bolton, Tim*
Boyd, Craig
Bratman, David
Bratman, Berni Phillips
Breth, Matthew
Briggs, Rachel
Brooks, Dusty
Callahan, BG
Callahan, Tim
Catanach, Dawn
Christopher, Joe
Christopher, Vandy
Claypool, Gavin
Collins, Sarah
Coopersmith, Anne
Cotton, Journee*
Croft, Janet Brennan
Crowe, Edith
Darga, Daniel
Darga, Lynne
DaSilva, Julia
Dean, Margaret
DeTardo, Merlin
DiPasquale, Willow
DiSante, Paula*
Donovan, Leslie
Dressler, Ben
Elber-Aviram, Hadas
Emanuel, Thomas*
Emerson, David
Emmons, Carl
Felmlee, Holly
Fisher, Jason*
Fitzsimmons, Phillip
Fitzsimmons, Diane*
Fox-Lenz, Alicia
Gaddis, Stephen
Gaydosik, Victoria*
Gilkey, Nyssa
Gilson, Christopher
Goodman, Jessica
Goodwin, Matthew
Green, Ron
Green, Melody
Grover, Leah
Guss, Pablo
Gustafsson, Angela*
Hackney, Penn*
Hagan, Leah*
Hamilton-Baca, Hailey
Hansen, Regina
Harrigan, Lisa*
Henrich, Christopher
Hodgman, Scott
Hood, Gwenyth*
Hopkins, Kivrin
Hunter, Joel
Hunter, Malcolm
Hunter, Sophia
Hyde, Sylvia
Irwin, Paul
James, Linda
Johnson, Lizabeth
Jones, Martha*
Kapsalis, Mary Jo
Kaur, Inderjit
King, Carol
Lakowski, Romuald
Lehning, Amber
Lenander, David
Lenz, Tim
Leonard, Bruce
Loughlin, Chris*
Maris, Carly
Marlow, Sean
Martsch, Nancy*
Maudlin, Lynn
Mayette, Annaliese
McKenna, Elise
Miner, Mark
Mitts, Rebecca
Moone, Grace
Morman, Mem
Morow, Jewell*
Pelsor, Jeanell
Powell, Karla
Rauscher, Bonnie
Rauscher, Eric
Raza, Sultana*
Reid, Robin
Robin, Doris
Ronn, Vicki
Rosegrant, John
Rottler, Cait
Santiago, Lawrence
Sena, Samantha
Shirley, Zane
Smith, Arden
Speth, Lee
Stauffer, Robert
Stone, Willard
Stone, Jana
Sun, Rivera
Surrey, Shane
Torregrossa, Michael*
Umland, Rebecca*
VanLoo, Marion*
VanLoo, Brynn*
Verba, Joan Marie*
Wagner, Wendell*
Waites, Elizabeth*
Walton, Jo
Watson, Duane*
Whitehouse, Stuart*
Widener, Cera
Williams, Donald*
Winegar, Astrid
Wise, Dennis
Wise, Martina
Wisniewski, Amy*
Wolf, Katherine*
Wright, Neil
Wright, Melissa
Yarrow, Patricia
Young, Joseph Rex

