



## Call for Papers: Mythopoeic Society Conference 45

Wheaton College, Norton, MA  
August 8-11, 2014

<http://mythcon.org/45>

## WHERE FANTASY FITS

### Scholar Guest of Honor: Richard C. West

Winner of the 1976 Mythopoeic Award for Inklings Scholarship for *Tolkien Criticism*.

### Author Guest of Honor: Ursula Vernon

Winner of the 2013 Mythopoeic Fantasy Award for Adult Literature for *Digger*.

Fantasy literature does not fit comfortably into any scheme. Both old and new, traditional and innovative, popular and elite, mainstream and esoteric, escapist and engaged, high-tech and anti-technology, fantasy defies definitions and transcends categories, dramatizing the incompleteness of our understanding of our own imaginations. At Mythcon 45 we will discuss the place of fantasy in our culture, our institutions, and our hearts.

Central to this theme will be questions of genre: What is fantasy? What are fairy stories? What constitutes the fantastic? What is fantasy versus magical realism? What is speculative fiction? How does Tolkien's legendarium fit in with the mythic texts such as *Beowulf* or the Norse Eddas or his scholarship? How do Lewis's Narnia books or his science fiction fit into the classic literary tradition? How do fantasists question our fundamental assumptions about literature and the world? We can discuss authors who explore different genres or modes of writing that do not lend themselves to easy categorization such as Neil Gaiman, Ursula K. Le Guin, Guy Gavriel Kay, Tim Powers, Terry Pratchett, and others who make us ponder what it means to fit into a particular style or format. We invite papers that broadly consider the nature and boundaries of fantasy and the relationship between fantasy and different literary and artistic forms—how fantasy fits or resists our attempts to classify and define it.

Papers and panels dealing with the conference themes (or other themes sparked in your brain by this topic) are encouraged. As always, we especially welcome proposals for papers and panels focusing on the work and interests of the Inklings (especially J. R. R. Tolkien, C. S. Lewis, and Charles Williams), of our Guests of Honor, and of other fantasy authors and themes. Papers and panels from a variety of critical perspectives and disciplines are welcome.

Individual papers will be scheduled for one hour to allow time for questions, but should be timed for oral presentation in 40 minutes maximum. Two presenters who wish to present shorter, related papers may also share a one-hour slot. Panels will be scheduled for 1.5-hour time slots and will normally include 3-5 presenters who speak briefly on the subject (usually 10-15 minutes), leaving substantial time for discussion with the audience.

Participants are encouraged to submit papers chosen for presentation at the conference to *Mythlore*, the refereed journal of the Mythopoeic Society (<http://www.mythsoc.org/mythlore>). All papers should conform to the MLA Style Manual. Papers from graduate and undergraduate students are especially encouraged; we offer an award for "Best Student Paper." See <http://www.mythsoc.org/awards/student-paper>.

Paper and panel proposals (250 word maximum), along with contact information, should be sent to the Papers Coordinator at the following email address by **15 April 2014**. AV and technology requests must be included in your proposal.

**Papers Coordinator:**

David D. Oberhelman  
Edmon Low Library  
Oklahoma State University  
[d.oberhelman@okstate.edu](mailto:d.oberhelman@okstate.edu)

The Mythopoeic Society is an international literary and educational organization devoted to the study, discussion, and enjoyment of the works of J. R. R. Tolkien, C. S. Lewis, Charles Williams, and mythopoeic literature. We believe the study of these writers can lead to greater understanding and appreciation of the literary, philosophical, and spiritual traditions which underlie their works, and can engender an interest in the study of myth, legend, and the genre of fantasy. Find out about past conferences at (<http://www.mythsoc.org/mythcon>).