

blends his physical stature and deep voice resembling Lewis's with an approachable intimacy (enhanced by the use of voiceovers from his writings) even when faced with the most tragic of situations." Ackland's Lewis, Baker continues, "is troubled by the complexity of his love for Joy; however, it never seems to threaten him with an emotional paralysis, as it does for Hopkins, who often appears distraught that his academic grasp of love and friendship has left him ill-equipped to cope with the real thing. Each film," according to Baker, "benefits from superb acting in all roles, with Winger and Bloom presenting contrasting yet realistic versions of personal resilience in the face of death. Both films," he argues, "enrich our understanding of Lewis, Joy, and their love for each other."

### Critical Readings: Part One

In the first of the deliberately diverse Critical Readings essays, Brandon Schneeberger looks at Lewis's late book *The Discarded Image*, in which "Lewis makes a case for what he calls the 'medieval model'—a system of thought that attempts to place and define nearly every aspect of the universe." Schneeberger notes that in this work "Lewis argues that the medieval model had a direct influence on the medieval artist and that there is a direct correlation between how one views the universe and how one makes art. In *The Discarded Image*," Schneeberger continues, "Lewis describes the order of the medieval universe and the medieval human before showing how the medieval understanding of art differs from that of the twentieth century." Schneeberger contends that "Lewis's argument offers valuable insight not only for those who study medieval literature but also for contemporary artists (whether novelists, poets, or painters) because it explains some of Lewis's fundamental ideas about what art should accomplish and the proper relationship of the artist to his object."

Linda Kern, a professional librarian, expands upon some of the same issues and themes dealt with by Steven D. Ealy in the "flagship" essay. Like Ealy, Kern pays special attention to Lewis's *An Experiment in Criticism*, but she also discusses another work titled *The Personal Heresy*. According to Kern, Lewis was a strong

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- "C.S. Lewis Library." Marion E. Wade Center, Wheaton College (Wheaton, IL), [www.wheaton.edu/media/wade-center/files/collections/author-library-listings/Lewis\\_Public\\_shelf\\_06022022.pdf](http://www.wheaton.edu/media/wade-center/files/collections/author-library-listings/Lewis_Public_shelf_06022022.pdf).
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- \_\_\_\_\_. *Narrative Poems*. Edited by Walter Hooper, Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1969.
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- Library of Congress. "Traditional Ballads," *The Library of Congress Celebrates the Songs of America*, n.d., [www.loc.gov/collections/songs-of-america/articles-and-essays/musical-styles/traditional-and-ethnic/traditional-ballads/](http://www.loc.gov/collections/songs-of-america/articles-and-essays/musical-styles/traditional-and-ethnic/traditional-ballads/).
- Muth, Benita Huffman. "'Few Return to the Sunlit Lands': Lewis's Classical Underworld in *The Silver Chair*." *Inklings Forever*:

of the Table. The descriptions and prescriptions in the resulting grid identify communication behaviors that exemplify the enactment of the Natural Laws as communication behavior. The forty descriptions of communication behaviors illustrate broad-based communication principles in the context of a universal ethical code. The grid offers a common framework for talking about human values in a variety of intercultural communication contexts. Ultimately, it is less important for such a taxonomy to exist than to be challenged, discussed, revised, and used to provide a touchstone for human connections. Kreeft suggests that “Principles are not conclusions but starting points, *principia*” (13). The Tao of Communication, connected to Lewis’s eight Natural Laws, can be a useful springboard for conversations about what constitutes the good, the beautiful, and the true in ethical human communication.

(Downing, *Planets in Peril* 124). For instance, in a letter to his friend Arthur Greeves he composed at age fifteen, Lewis wrote, “When one has set aside the rubbish that H. G. Wells always puts in, there remains a great deal of original, thoughtful, and suggestive work in it” (Hooper, *They Stand Together* 49).

Lewis continued reading science fiction into adulthood, even as his scholarly interests focused on medieval and Renaissance literature. He discovered David Lindsay’s *A Voyage to Arcturus* (1920) in 1935 and remained fascinated with the novel even as in certain ways he was appalled by it. He praised Lindsay both in his 1947 essay “On Stories” and in a 1962 conversation with Kingsley Amis and Brian Aldiss, published in 1965 as “Unreal Estates.”<sup>2</sup> In the latter, speaking of *A Voyage to Arcturus*, he admits that “scientifically it’s nonsense, the style is appalling, and yet the ghastly vision comes through” (145). Yet, like Wells’s *The First Men in the Moon* (1901), with Lindsay another influence on Lewis’s Space Trilogy, he found significance inspiration for his own vision despite his misgivings about the author’s worldview. Writing in “On Stories,” Lewis noted that Lindsay was “the first writer to discover what ‘other planets’ are really good for in fiction”: the “idea of otherness,” the voyage not just into space but into another dimension (12).

Lewis’s reading of science fiction was not limited to British authors like Wells or Lindsay; he also read American science fiction magazines, which began to dominate the science fiction marketplace in the mid-twentieth century. In “On Stories” he remarked that the stories in the American magazines might be “inferior romances” but nonetheless offered suggestive ideas. Their inferiority, he wrote, stemmed from a trait shared with novels such as Wells’s *The War of the Worlds* (1898): in most cases they were unable to keep the story going without endangering their characters, and thus in “the hurry and scurry . . . the poetry of the basic idea is lost” (10). Lewis demonstrated a more positive attitude toward one American magazine eight years later, in a 1955 talk he gave to the Cambridge University English Club, posthumously published as “On Science Fiction.”<sup>3</sup> He said *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction* (founded 1949) was the best of the American science fiction

Are these the Pagans you spoke of? Know your betters and crouch,  
dogs;  
You that have Vichy-water in your veins and worship the event,  
Your goddess History (whom your fathers called the strumpet  
Fortune). (41–43)

As before, Lewis himself now sounds like the characters he describes. Although his words run the risk of sounding somewhat overblown, Lewis himself willingly risked his own life on the front lines in World War I. And he clearly supported the allied war effort during World War II, unlike the pacifists, Quislings, and imbibers of “Vichy-water” he mocks so stridently here. People without values, he suggests, will accept whatever “History” throws their way. They will submit to Fortune’s whims rather than fighting for the values and ideals others willingly die to defend.

### “Evolutionary Hymn”

Lewis’s contempt for the “goddess History” (aka “the strumpet Fortune”) is also clear in his satirical “Evolutionary Hymn” (King, *Collected Poems* 384–85). This poem mocks the Darwinian idea that the only way to evaluate a species’ achievements involves mere evolutionary survival. The opening stanza, with its brief, heavily end-stopped lines and its verbs’ strongly accented opening syllables, outlines the poem’s basic argument:

Lead us, Evolution, lead us  
Up the future’s endless stair:  
Chop us, change us, prod us, weed us.  
For stagnation is despair:  
Groping, guessing, yet progressing,  
Lead us nobody knows where. (1–6)

The wittily paradoxical opening line sounds almost like a religious plea. Upward motion is, after all, a common religious idea, especially among Christians, but the upward motion Lewis mocks has no clear direction or goal. The emphatic stress on verbs in the third and fifth