

Editorial Note

In *An Experiment in Criticism*, C.S. Lewis writes, “. . . we seek an enlargement of our being. We want to be more than ourselves. Each of us by nature sees the whole world from one point of view with a perspective and a selectiveness peculiar to himself. . . . We want to see with other eyes, to imagine with other imaginations, to feel with other hearts, as well as with our own. . . . We demand windows.”

In 2023, at any moment, we can access the outward expressions of thousands of diverse perspectives, imaginations, and hearts through a few taps or keystrokes. The merit of such unlimited access and the technologies that grant it has been—and ought to be—debated in many forums. But it’s safe to say that instant access to others’ frequently off-the-cuff points of view doesn’t usually generate the sort of “enlargement of our being” Lewis describes here. In fact, unfortunately, the temptation can be to respond to others’ “hot takes” with our own, thereby shutting doors instead of opening any windows.

In a world filled with careless communication, we at *VII* continue to believe that considered, deliberate scholarship becomes arguably more important, if perhaps less popular. The best scholarship is always opening windows: onto a range of perspectives, different historical eras and events, unique understandings, or fresh interpretations of our place and purpose as human beings. The best scholarship enlarges our understanding, our intellect, and our character.

In these pages of *VII* you will find this quality of scholarship. Three of the articles in Volume 39 open windows onto the life and thought of C.S. Lewis, himself. Who was Lewis, beyond what we know of him through his own writing and the biographical work of others? Steven Beebe and Joel Heck place a piece in that puzzle, guiding us through a fresh archive of letters—previously unpublished—that reveals how Lewis operated as an editor and professional colleague: a strategic, collegial side of Lewis that nonetheless shows the consistency of his character and aspirations, no matter the context.

Carrie Birmingham and Clark Moreland explore societal forces—the Edwardian public school system and the Cold War, respectively—that worked on Lewis to shape his character and the perspectives that emanated from it. From their work we receive not only understanding about what influenced Lewis’s thinking and writing; we also find models for how to integrate life’s hardships into one’s maturation and how to sincerely evaluate and wrestle with one’s convictions over a lifetime.

Kathryn Wehr, discussing Dorothy L. Sayers, likewise demonstrates how Sayers’s play *The Zeal of Thy House* provided new eyes and a new imagination through which to see the story of the fire and rebuilding of Canterbury Cathedral. Sayers’s re-envisioning of the historical narrative reveals poten-

tial spiritual dimensions to historical events—and the proposition that life’s seemingly mundane activities might be shot-through with the divine, if one’s perspective is so angled.

Also, in this volume we honor the magnanimous lives of three educators whose labor and companionship in this work have deeply impacted *VII*. Rolland Hein and Rosamund Kent Sprague were wise and faithful friends of and advisors to *VII* for many years. Ann Loades, though not directly connected with the journal, shaped the discipline of theology and the realm of Sayers scholarship in ways that mustn’t go unrecognized by a publication that has benefitted from her scholarship.

Finally, with this volume we welcome Jeffrey Barbeau, professor of theology at Wheaton College, to the *VII* Editorial Board as a peer reviewer with expertise in religion and literature, the history of Christian thought, and the British Romanticism that influenced *VII*’s authors. We also want to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to two *VII* Editorial Board members who are rotating out of their advisory roles with the publication of this volume. Lee Ryken and Ralph Wood have been indispensable readers, advisors, guides, and friends to this journal and its staff for decades. Trustworthy experts on matters related to Lewis, Tolkien, British literature, and the Christian imagination, they will also be missed for their clear-eyed assessments of submissions and the wit and grace of their camaraderie. May this next season of their lives be equally grace-filled.

And may you, reader, find in these pages of robust scholarship windows that not only broaden your view and your understanding, but that let the light in as well.

MARJORIE LAMP MEAD
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

KENDRA LANGDON JUSKUS
EDITOR

Acknowledgements

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Online Content

VII is available online at journals.wheaton.edu/vii. Readers may purchase online subscription packages, in addition to print copies, at our digital home. Access to reviews from this volume of the journal, as well as occasional supplemental material, is available on the website without a subscription.

Book Reviews

- Louis Markos, *C.S. Lewis for Beginners* (2022). Reviewed by Josiah Peterson
- Martin Ferguson Smith (ed.), *In and Out of Bloomsbury: Biographical Essays on Twentieth-Century Writers and Artists* (2021). Reviewed by Luci Parrish
- Book Notes

Concerning the Contributors

Steven A. Beebe

Steven A. Beebe (Ph.D. University of Missouri-Columbia) is Regents' and University Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Communication Studies at Texas State University. He is author or co-author of fourteen books (with subsequent editions totaling more than 85 books) that have been used at hundreds of colleges and universities throughout the world (including Canadian, Russian, and Chinese editions) by several million students. He has also authored or co-authored more than 75 articles and book chapters. He served as president of the National Communication Association, the largest academic communication association in the world. His book *C.S. Lewis and the Craft of Communication*, along with several of his articles about Lewis, was the basis for his being selected *Scholar of the Year* by the Religious Communication Association in 2022.

Carrie Birmingham

Carrie Birmingham is interested in the moral and spiritual implications and foundations of teaching and learning. This interest led her to C.S. Lewis's work on education and his own educational experience. She is an associate professor at Pepperdine University in Malibu, CA, where she teaches courses in teaching methodology and educational theory.

Joel Heck

Dr. Joel Heck serves Concordia Lutheran Seminary as interim president, having taught Old and New Testament and the life and writings of C.S. Lewis for more than three decades at two Concordia Universities. He holds a Doctor of Theology from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. He is the author or editor of sixteen books, including four on C.S. Lewis. His most recent book on Lewis is *No Ordinary People: Twenty-one Friendships of C.S. Lewis* (2022, Winged Lion Press). He has authored more than 120 articles, and he is the creator of "Chronologically Lewis," a database of detailed information about the lives of C.S. Lewis and his brother Warren. Recently, he and his daughter Brenda wrote a children's book in the tradition of Narnia entitled *The Lion That Roared* (Lulu.com). He and his wife Cheryl own a home in Austin, TX.

Clark Moreland

Clark Moreland serves as lecturer of English and director of the Heimmermann Center for Engaged Teaching at the University of Texas Permian Basin, where he earned his MA in 2005. He is a recipient of the University of Texas Regents' Outstanding Teaching Award, and in 2023 he was elected as a fellow of the University of Texas Academy of Distinguished Teachers. He has published on Edgar Allan Poe and has forthcoming publications on Harriet Jacobs and Martin Luther King Jr. He is the author of *Will: Parenting at the Crossroads of Disability and Joy* (2018), a memoir about raising a son with Down syndrome.

Kathryn Wehr

Kathryn Wehr (PhD, St Andrews) is the editor and annotator of Dorothy L. Sayers's *The Man Born to be King: Wade Annotated Edition* (IVP, 2023). Her other scholarly writing has appeared in *The Journal of Inklings Studies*, *Logos: A Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture*, *American Benedictine Review*, *Mount Carmel*, *Presence, Theology and Sexuality*, and *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*. She is the managing editor of the quarterly *Logos: A Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture* at the University of St. Thomas in Saint Paul, MN, where she especially enjoys selecting cover art and writing the Art Notes.