

# EN 245: C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, and the Inklings

WINTER 2018



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**Class Location:** A2131  
**Class Time:** W/F 2:30-3:45 pm  
**Office Location:** L2069  
**Office Hours:** T/Th 1-2 pm

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## Texts:

Lewis, C.S. *Perelandra*. HarperCollins, 2005.  
---. *Till We Have Faces*. Mariner, 2012.  
Tolkien, J.R.R. *The Fellowship of the Ring*. HarperCollins, 2007.  
Williams, Charles. *Descent into Hell*. Eerdmans, 1937.  
Readings on Moodle (to be **printed** and brought to class)

## Course Description:

A study of the major literary works, themes, and ideas of C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, and their friends, the group known as the Inklings. This course examines themes such as the use of myth to explore problems of modernity, the relationship between Christian faith and art, as well as the debates over literary versus popular fiction.

## Students completing this course will:

- gain a broad knowledge of the Inklings, their work, and the social, historical, and intellectual context in which they produced that work.
- consider the relationship between literature and myth, especially as it was understood by the various members of the Inklings.
- be able to write and speak to the dominant themes in the Inklings' work, namely, Christianity, fantasy and the imagination, love, and friendship.
- develop further the skill of literary analysis and research (where applicable) by practicing close reading and composing explications and papers.
- develop further the skill of oral communication through various classroom opportunities.

## Evaluation:

- 10% Participation:** Students will *visibly* engage with the class and the texts. In other words, look alert, bring *physical* copies of your texts to class, *write* in those physical copies, ask questions, share your thoughts, say “I don’t understand” when you don’t understand, and visit me from time to time during my office hours.
- 20% Quizzes:** Students will write six quizzes over the course of the term, and the best five will count, worth 4% each. For the dates of the quizzes, see the Course Schedule.
- 20% Explication/Response to Key Passage Assignment:** Students will write two explication/response to passage assignments, each worth 10% and of roughly 500 words in length. The first assignment will be on Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings* and/or related material; the second will be on Tolkien’s “Beren and Luthien” and/or Barfield’s *Orpheus*. For the due dates of the assignments, see the Course Schedule.
- 20% Short Essay:** Students will write one short essay of roughly 1500 words in length on one of the following texts: Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings*, Lewis’s *Perelandra*, or Williams’s *Descent into Hell*. Note: If you are planning to write a second essay in EN 245 (and receive the prerequisite B- or higher on the short essay), you may not write on the same author in that essay as you do in this one. For the due date of this essay, see the Course Schedule.
- 30% Final Exam or Long Essay (or Creative Project):** Students who receive a grade of B- or higher on their short essay have the option of writing a long essay or creative project instead of a final exam. The essay, to be roughly 2500 words in length, must have a research component; there are no specific criteria for the creative project, other than it must exhibit the same intellectual heft as a long essay: students may write a dialogue, create a role-playing game, make a video, etc. The long essay or creative project is due on the date of the final exam: **Wednesday, April 10<sup>th</sup> @ 9:00 am in Airhart.**

## Course Requirements:

- The classroom is a professional setting. For this reason, I request that you call me “Professor” or “Dr.”; I will, in turn, address you by the name you prefer. Professionalism is also required in emails. When you email me, please begin with “Dear Professor . . .” and use proper grammar and syntax.
- **Laptops** are a source of distraction, and I prefer not to have them in my classroom. If you think you need your laptop, you are free to come talk to me to make your case for its usefulness, but otherwise, please take notes with your pen or pencil. Students with accommodations are obviously excepted.
- **Phones** are distracting; put them away.
- You are responsible for everything we read and discuss in class (whether you are present or not), including any announced changes to our schedule.
- Explications and essays are due in hardcopy at the beginning of class on the date specified; a digital copy must also be submitted to Moodle by class time.
- Late papers will be marked down one refined letter grade per class day late. Extensions may be granted on assignments in exceptional circumstances but must be arranged for in advance (or vouched for by appropriate medical, etc. documentation).
- Any student who misses more than eight class sessions will automatically fail the course.
- All explications and essays must be submitted to receive a passing grade in the course.
- The most current version of this syllabus will always be available on Moodle.
- Students are required to check their Ambrose email accounts regularly.

## Course Schedule:

Date	Topic (s)	Reading	Assignment
Jan			
4	Introductions: Managing Expectations	No Readings	
9	The 'Inklings'	<b>M:</b> Carpenter, "Thursday Evenings" (1979)	
11	Concerning Hobbits, a Ring, and Tom Bombadil	Tolkien, <i>The Fellowship of the Ring</i> (1954): Prologue-Bk. 1, Ch. 7	
13		Last day to add/drop with tuition refund	
16	Of Men, Dwarves, and Elves	<i>The Fellowship of the Ring:</i> Bk. 1, Ch. 8-Bk. 2, Ch. 2	
18	<i>Faerie: An Interlude</i>	<b>M:</b> Tolkien, "On Fairy-Stories" (1947): Start at p. 57 ("And with that ...")	
19	A Saturday	<i>LOTR</i> Movie Marathon???	
23	More Elves	<i>The Fellowship of the Ring:</i> Bk. 2, Ch. 3-end of Bk. 2	
25	Evil and Redemption	<b>M:</b> <i>The Return of the King</i> (1955): Bk. 6, Chs. 3, 7-9	Quiz 1
30	Words and Worlds	Lewis, <i>Perelandra</i> (1943): Chs. 1-5	
Feb			
1	Temptation in Paradise: "I will speak greater words than these"	<i>Perelandra:</i> Chs. 6-11	First Explication Due
6	The Great Dance	<i>Perelandra:</i> Chs. 12-17	Quiz 2
8	A 'Metaphysical' Thriller	Williams, <i>Descent into Hell</i> (1937): Chs. 1-4	
13	The Doctrine of Substituted Love	<i>Descent into Hell:</i> Chs. 5-8	
15	Ultimate Things	<i>Descent into Hell:</i> Chs. 9-12	Quiz 3
20	Winter Reading Week	No Classes	
22	Winter Reading Week	No Classes	
27	" <i>Incipit vita nova</i> "	<i>Descent into Hell</i>	
Mar			
1	Beren's Background	<b>M:</b> Tolkien, from <i>The Silmarillion</i> (pub. 1977): "Ainulindalë: The Music of the Ainur"	
6	"a fair tale, though it is sad"	<b>M:</b> Tolkien, from <i>The Silmarillion</i> (pub. 1977): "Of Beren and Luthien"	Short Essay Due
8	"there are none, now [...] that remember it aright as it was told of old"	<b>M:</b> "Of Beren and Luthien"	Quiz 4
11		Last day to request revised time for final exam	

13	Orpheus: A Primer	<b>M:</b> Barfield, <i>Orpheus: A Poetic Drama</i> (1937): Act I	
15	“What I or me / Is not the heart?”	<b>M:</b> <i>Orpheus: A Poetic Drama:</i> Acts II & III	
20	“Can Eros <i>become</i> Agape?”	<b>M:</b> <i>Orpheus: A Poetic Drama:</i> Act IV	Quiz 5
22		Last day to withdraw from courses without academic penalty	
22	Apuleius and Lewis	Lewis, <i>Till We Have Faces</i> (1956): Part One, Chs. 1-7	
27	Loss and Disbelief	<i>Till We Have Faces:</i> Part One, Chs. 8-15	Second Explication Due
29	The Queen of Glome	<i>Till We Have Faces:</i> Part One, Chs. 16-21	
Apr			
3	An Assumption	<i>Till We Have Faces:</i> Part Two, Chs. 1-4	Quiz 6
5	Conclusions	No Readings	



“Black Rider” by John Howe