

Queer Tolkien: A Bibliographical Essay on Tolkien and Alterity

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The “queer” in Tolkien has been an ongoing concern in studies of his legendarium. Yet, what exactly is meant by this term? It is a term Tolkien uses often; in just the opening couple of pages of the first chapter of *The Lord of the Rings* those of Hobbiton refer to Buckland “where folks are so queer” and assert that the Brandybucks are “a queer breed,” to cite just two instances (Tolkien uses some version of the term nine times in the opening chapter alone).¹ In Tolkien’s usage, the adjective is clustered with others like “peculiar”² and not “natural”³; the relevant Oxford English Dictionary definition clearly indicated is “Strange, odd, peculiar, eccentric. Also: of questionable character; suspicious, dubious.”⁴ However, this meaning has been largely superseded, at least in the USA, by the meaning

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first recorded by the Oxford English Dictionary in 1914, “Of a person: homosexual. Hence: of or relating to homosexuals or homosexuality,”⁵ and since the term is often used to characterize Bilbo and/or Frodo, our bachelor hobbits, there has been a slippage between the two meanings in contemporary understanding, regardless of Tolkien’s intentions.

What the two meanings have in common, of course, is *difference*; whether we mean odd or homosexual there is an understood departure from the perceived norm whether that difference is understood to be explicitly sexual or not. A related term, then, is “alterity,” the subject of this volume, which the Oxford English Dictionary defines as “The fact or state of being other or different; diversity, difference, otherness; an instance of this.”⁶ This can accommodate much, but in the interests of space and time, and in order to maintain a clear focus, I am going to limit my discussion in this essay to queer Tolkien in a more limited sense. Thus, I will be excluding racial difference from my discussion, not because it is unimportant (cf. Helen Young’s call to engage seriously with critical race theory in her 2015 review essay of Christopher Vaccaro’s *The Body in Tolkien*),⁷ but rather because the topic is of sufficient weight to merit its own separate consideration in this volume where it is carefully and thoroughly considered by Robin Anne Reid.⁸ Similarly, I lay aside the question of women in Tolkien, again not because it is unimportant but because it is considered elsewhere; see, for example, the recent publication of *Perilous and Fair: Women in the Works and Life of J. R. R. Tolkien* edited by Janet Brennan Croft and Leslie A. Donovan, which features both classic and new essays on women in Tolkien, and especially the bibliographical essay on female characters it contains, again by Robin Anne Reid.⁹

I will limit this survey and discussion of scholarship instead to criticism that deals with what is “queer” in Tolkien in the more limited senses of both sexuality and identity, thus glancing at the two definitions I began with: queer sexuality, specifically homosexuality; identification of the Other, the different, as queer, as peculiar, as in some way suspicious. I will begin with the first of these.

One way of categorizing essays that deal with the possibility of queer sexuality in Tolkien is according to whether they find it there or not. Thus, we have critical treatments that insist that there is no homosexuality in *The Lord of the Rings*, that there is homosexuality in *The Lord of the Rings*, that there is homosociality, or that sexual ambiguity rules the day. Into the first group we might place essays by Daniel Timmons and potentially David M. Craig, in the second one by Valerie Rohy, in the third a piece by

Anna Smol, and in the final the assessment of Esther Saxey. On one end of the continuum then, Timmons and Craig, both published in 2001, are perhaps representative. In “Hobbit Sex and Sensuality in *The Lord of the Rings*,” Daniel Timmons distinguishes between sex and sensuality, finding plenty of the latter, especially in Frodo’s responses to Goldberry, Arwen, and Galadriel.¹⁰ He finds the bond between Frodo and Sam to be a “spiritual” one, contrasted with the heteronormative bond Sam has with Rosie, and he sees no conflict between the two.¹¹ In a somewhat similar vein, in “‘Queer Lodgings’: Gender and Sexuality in *The Lord of the Rings*,” David M. Craig notes the merging of religious spirituality with love in figures like Galadriel, and the pair of Aragorn and Arwen, but especially Frodo and Sam.¹² Again this love is a spiritual one, and while Craig acknowledges it as queer, he also sees it as refined beyond the plane of the sexual. Craig considers the history of male friendship especially in the context of WWI and Anglo-Catholicism and discusses the close personal relationships that develop in *The Lord of the Rings* as analogous. Both of these essays focus on the special nature of the friendship between Frodo and Sam, and that is typical of essays concerned with the possibility of homosexuality in *The Lord of the Rings*. Both Timmons and Craig acknowledge a deep, spiritual friendship between Frodo and Sam that is absent any overt homosexuality. While Craig sees the love between them as queer and Timmons does not, both see their love as spiritual, beyond (and above) the sexual.

At the other end of the spectrum from Timmons and Craig, we might place Valerie Rohy’s “On Fairy Stories,” part of the 2004 issue of *Modern Fiction Studies* dedicated to Tolkien.¹³ In this queer reading of *The Lord of the Rings*, Rohy focuses on the frustrated, incomplete nature of all sexuality in the text, especially the homosexual relationship between Frodo and Sam. Her analysis builds on Lacan’s notion of sexuality as always incomplete and the Ring as a Lacanian *point de capiton* (quilting point or anchoring point) of the narrative binding meaning and becoming a locus of desire. Just as the Ring is a desire that can never be fulfilled (only Sauron can possess it; those who desire it become possessed by it), it represents in its lack of completion sexuality itself. In this way, it is analogous to the courtly love relationship as Lacan understands it. The Ring thus becomes an externalization of an internal failure of sexuality and love. For Rohy, the reality of the queer love between Frodo and Sam is simultaneously its incompleteness, its impossibility, as homosexuality becomes a “scapegoat for the failure of all sexual relations.”¹⁴

In the same issue of *Modern Fiction Studies*, Anna Smol's "'Oh ... oh ... Frodo!': Readings of Male Intimacy in *The Lord of the Rings*" examines the relationship between Frodo and Sam in the context of British male friendship in WWI, noting the physical intimacy that emerges in the extreme circumstances of war.¹⁵ In this, she takes a similar approach as Craig, as she acknowledges, but hers is a more in-depth consideration, and she sees Frodo and Sam as depicting the homosocial rather than the homosexual as Craig asserts (though he finds a spiritual rather than a physical relationship). She then turns to the contemporary reception of that relationship in film and fanfiction. She notes that the films downplay much of the physical intimacy of the books, but still maintain enough to create a discomfort that questions traditional Western masculinity. The survey of slash fanfiction she includes speaks to its variety, but establishes that most grows directly out of the homosocial relationships created by Tolkien. Whatever its roots in the experience of male intimacy in WWI, changing historical and cultural circumstances have created something that has grown beyond Tolkien's intentions.

Like Smol's piece, Esther Saxey's 2005 essay on "Homoeroticism" considers both novel and film depictions and finds persistent, but not definitive indications of homoeroticism in both the novel and film adaptation.¹⁶ She reviews the textual evidence for homoeroticism, noting the "intense hierarchical homosocial relations"¹⁷ of the novel and arguing that the exact natures of all relationships in the text "are ambiguous, and could easily be sexual."¹⁸ She argues that, ironically, by emphasizing traditional romantic heterosexual relationships in the film, the male-male relationships become potentially more sexualized. As these five essays demonstrate, the subtext of Tolkien's novel, especially in regard to the novel's depiction of physical intimacy in the friendship of Frodo and Sam, is open to a range of interpretations, and the afterlife of the novel, particularly its film adaptation, brings out and interprets that subtext.

Other essays address the queer in Tolkien by investigating a broader definition of queerness focused on difference and ambiguity. David Halperin observes that the queer is "by definition whatever is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant ... it describes a horizon of possibility whose precise extent and heterogenous scope cannot in principle be delimited in advance."¹⁹ Annamarie Jagose asserts that "queer is less an identity than a *critique* of identity ... it is more accurate to represent it as ceaselessly interrogating both the preconditions of identity and its effects."²⁰ Such an understanding of queer can be seen to

inform a number of essays and unlike the essays considered above, they do not focus so strongly on the relationship between Frodo and Sam, but find queerness more broadly, and define that queerness in terms other than sexuality, or at least more broadly than sexuality.

In this regard, Jane Chance's work is seminal. She has interrogated this notion of queerness in a number of essays beginning with "'Queer' Hobbits: The Problem of Difference in the Shire."²¹ This essay focuses on the politics of difference in the Shire, which associates queerness with "outside" and observes how Bilbo negotiates his negative identity as queer through his generosity and respect for the lower classes. As well as Bilbo, this chapter considers both Frodo and Gollum and sees the One Ring as symbolic of sameness; opposed to the Ring is respect for difference.²² The Ring promises enhancement of the Self but ironically creates an erasure of the Self. The small drama of Self versus Other that plays out in the Shire is the lesson of the text writ small.

In her 2005 essay "Tolkien and the Other: Race and Gender in Middle-earth," Chance continues to explore the text's concern with difference.²³ Taking as a starting point *apartheid* "apartness," Chance traces Tolkien's attitudes toward difference through his scholarship ("Sigelwara Land," his edition and translation of the Old English *Exodus*, his essay on "overmod") and his own status as displaced orphan and religious minority, and later sidelined academically through his choice of field. Through negative examples, not only the domination of Sauron and Saruman, but the self-absorption of the Ents, as well as positive ones, primarily Frodo and his acceptance of Gollum, Chance explores Tolkien's abhorrence of prejudice born of difference. She also finds Tolkien's scholarship to provide a point of access to his fiction in her 2006 essay "Subversive Fantasist: Tolkien on Class Difference."²⁴ Here, Chance uses Tolkien's scholarship on Chaucer to interrogate class difference in his fiction, noting how he inverts aristocratic values in both. Class and regional differences established in the Shire become racial and national ones as Tolkien creates heroes who embody difference and cut across boundaries, observing that "what Tolkien decries is condemnation of any sort of alterity as queer and 'unnatural.'"²⁵

In 2009, Chance turns to the film's portrayal of difference, focusing on the opposition between the hyper-masculine Orcs and the feminized pair of Frodo and Sam in her essay "'In the Company of Orcs': Peter Jackson's Queer Tolkien."²⁶ Her essay focuses on the particular scene in Jackson's film in which Frodo and Sam don Orc armor and temporarily join a

company of Orcs moving through Mordor. Her examination of this scene and its novel counterpart finds that “Jackson’s crucial scene in his film, ‘In the Company of Orcs,’ in echoing LaBute’s film *In the Company of Men*, queers Tolkien by accentuating the hyper-masculinity and sadism of the Orcs and hypo-masculinity and gentleness of the disguised lovers Frodo and Sam. Underlying the feudal relationships of all the Hobbits, Tolkien’s queerness tropes gender binaries throughout the epic.”²⁷ Her 2016 book *Tolkien, Self and Other: “This Queer Creature”* continues her abiding concern with the queer in Tolkien.²⁸ This work is interested in the interplay between Tolkien’s scholarly and creative work and how Tolkien’s own sense of alterity finds expression in all his writing. Chance accounts for these resonances through an interrogation of Tolkien as queer, examining “his creation of a queer—nonnormative—mythology based on a privileging of the marginal.”²⁹ This work draws on and expands many of the ideas present in the works discussed in this essay and that appear in the present volume.

Chance is not the only scholar concerned with the question of queer difference in *The Lord of the Rings*. In the same issue of *Modern Fiction Studies* that delivers the Rohy and Smol essays (the three make up the section titled “Queering *The Lord of the Rings*”), Jes Battis’ “Gazing Upon Sauron: Hobbits, Elves, and the Queering of the Postcolonial Optic” explores the position of the Hobbits in the text as postcolonial subjects in a “matrix of cultural power.”³⁰ Battis argues that the Hobbits are made queer through the gazes of others; this queering thus makes the male Hobbit the “most radical enunciation of the feminine”³¹ within the text. The essay touches on gender binary deconstruction in Shelob and Galadriel and explores how the Hobbits are treated as colonial subjects by both the Eye of Sauron and the Mirror of Galadriel.

It is not always the Hobbits that become the locus of interest in explorations of queer difference in Tolkien’s fiction. Lucia Opreanu looks at the figure of Gollum (a degraded hobbit) in her 2011 essay, while Jolanta N. Komornicka’s 2013 essay focuses instead on the Orcs. In “The Inescapable Other—Identity Transitions and Mutations in the Construction of Tolkien’s Gollum/Sméagol,” Opreanu focuses on Gollum’s sense of identity and relationship to Frodo, utilizing the concept of the *doppelgänger* as well as binary pairs in Tolkien (Gandalf/Saruman, Boromir/Faramir, Elves/Orcs, Shire/Mordor, etc.) as illustrating the Self/Other construction.³² She observes the divided Self in Gollum in his use of language and his obsessive possessiveness and finds the text to demonstrate that identity is constructed through difference,

and the Self finds its definition through its relation to the Other.³³ Komornicka, on the other hand, focuses on the Orcs in her consideration of the Other. In “The Ugly Elf: Orc Bodies, Perversion, and Redemption in *The Silmarillion* and *The Lord of the Rings*,” Komornicka touches on the Orc as Other to all races of Middle-earth, associating the Orc with Jeffrey Cohen’s Intimate Stranger, “a monsterized version of what a member of society can become.”³⁴

Difference and the relation with the Other are concerns as well for Benjamin Saxton. In his 2013 essay, “Tolkien and Bakhtin on Authorship, Literary Freedom, and Alterity,” Saxton reads Tolkien in light of Bakhtin’s notion of the author, noting how both partake in a collaborative view of authorship in which the author shares narrative duties with his characters and characters are subjects with agency rather than objects of authorial control.³⁵ He finds Bakhtin’s concept of alterity demonstrated in character relationships in *The Lord of the Rings*, especially Self–Other relationships, noting the exemplification of Bakhtin’s location of the Other in the Self; Frodo and Gollum are perhaps the most obvious example of this. Finally, he finds both authors share what he calls an “ethics of creativity” in their notions of authorship as shared and finds the mystery of free will and fate to be central to Tolkien’s fiction. In interesting ways, Saxton’s discussion of Tolkien’s alterity, which Saxton sees as Bakhtinian, is strikingly similar to the ideas of French philosopher Emmanuel Lévinas, who sees the Self as defined in terms of the Other.

In Lévinas’ conception, knowledge of the Self is rooted in the encounter with the Other, and crucial to that relation is both the utter alterity of the Other and our desire for the Other. Some of the most recent work on Tolkien and alterity utilizes Lévinas’ ideas, such as Joseph Tadie’s 2015 “‘That the World Not Be Usurped’: Emmanuel Levinas and J. R. R. Tolkien on Serving the Other as Release from Bondage.”³⁶ Tadie focuses on the encounter between Bilbo and Gandalf in the opening chapters of *The Hobbit*, considering as well the Bilbo who appears in the Council of Elrond scene in *The Fellowship of the Ring* as a measure of Bilbo’s ethical growth. In their initial encounter, Tadie sees in Bilbo the image of unreflective and indolent concupiscence and associates the initial figure he cuts with the dragon, and in Gandalf he perceives the ethically alert servant, finding their encounter to exemplify the positive change that can follow when “the voice of an-Other reaches the Self.”³⁷

Deidre Dawson’s essay in this volume also finds a connection between Lévinas and Tolkien, and this philosopher provides a way of examining

what many of the scholars whose work is discussed here are concerned with: How difference is imagined and how the queer functions in Tolkien's fiction, however figured.³⁸ In considering future directions for scholarship that focuses on alterity, the work of Lévinas has the potential to prove fruitful. What seems less likely to prove fruitful is a singular focus on the question of the homosexuality of characters in *The Lord of the Rings*. A move away from such a focus is already happening, as one can see from the chronology of such scholarship discussed here. Timmons' and Craig's essays were published in 2001, Rohy's and Smol's in 2004, and Saxey's in 2005. Little has appeared since. In a sense, the question is as settled as it can be. Did Tolkien write a homosexual relationship between any characters, specifically Frodo and Sam, in his novel? Clearly, no. Can readers find such relationship(s) in his novel? Clearly, yes.

For scholarship concerned with the sexual identity of characters in Tolkien's fiction, two areas provide possibilities for exploration. One is a broadening of interest in Tolkien's work beyond just *The Lord of the Rings*. As the foregoing survey of scholarship reveals, considerations of the queer in Tolkien are preoccupied with the characters of *The Lord of the Rings*. There is little consideration of even *The Hobbit*, let alone *The Silmarillion* or Tolkien's shorter works such as *Leaf by Niggle*, *Smith of Wootton Major*, etc. Stephen Yandell's essay in this volume goes some way to correct the imbalance, but many more areas are left to explore.³⁹ Strong, devoted male relationships are certainly in evidence in *The Silmarillion*, for example; one need only consider Beleg's devotion to Túrin and his tragic death at Túrin's hands (albeit accidental) or Finrod's commitment to Beren, also leading to his death. Fingon's rescue of Maedhros and the friendship between them could also be considered in this regard. A second avenue for scholarship concerned with the potential homosexuality of Tolkien's characters is a focus not on Tolkien's writing but on the adaptations of his work.

The adaptations most often a focus for scholarship are Peter Jackson's film adaptations of both *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* and, increasingly, fanfiction. There has already been a fair amount of scholarly attention to Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy which came out in 2001–2003, and three of the essays discussed here, Smol's, Saxey's, and Chance's "In the Company of Orcs," consider how Jackson's movies queer Tolkien's text, or expose the queerness already present. Valerie Rohy's essay in this volume does just this, focusing on Jackson's adaptation of the figure of Saruman.⁴⁰ However, Jackson's *The Hobbit* series was

only released in 2012–2014, so scholarship is just beginning to appear in print. Some treatments which focus on the queerness of Jackson's adaptation have begun to appear in online venues, however. Thomas J. West, III's "The Exquisite Queerness of The Hobbit," for example, discusses several queer elements of the film, noting that its use of camp distinguishes it from Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings*.⁴¹ West discusses fan interpretations of and creative responses to both Tolkien's text and Jackson's film as part of his discussion, and that inclusion points to another kind of adaptation that is increasingly becoming an area of scholarly attention.

Fan studies began as a version of reception studies but is becoming increasingly interested in the creative work produced by fans such as fanfiction and fan art. The Fan Studies Network, which was formed in 2012 and has held an annual conference since 2013, lists twelve journals devoted in some way to fan studies on their website.⁴² This growing area of study intersects with a focus on queer Tolkien in promising ways. As Anna Smol notes in her essay reviewed here, slash fanfiction, which focuses on sexual relationships between characters of the same gender, is growing.⁴³ Smol discusses several examples and notes how such creations interrogate other aspects of difference such as social class, concluding that such works demonstrate how relationships such as Frodo's and Sam's "are to a large extent historically and culturally determined."⁴⁴ Though focused on race, Robin Anne Reid makes a similar call in her essay in this volume to expand scholarly focus to works written by fans that transform Tolkien's works.⁴⁵

One question that arises is whether fans who create work responding to Tolkien's fiction are seeking to fill an absence perceived in Tolkien's text or responding to a latent queerness. The review of scholarship conducted here suggests that there would be little scholarly agreement on such a question; one imagines Timmons, for example, would claim the former while Rohy might assert the latter. However, the question posits perhaps a false dichotomy as well as a value judgment, implying that responding to a present but sublimated queerness in Tolkien's text would somehow be more legitimate than responding to an absence of the queer. In fact, a number of scholars have interrogated the gaps and silences of narrative as sites of meaning production. Allen Frantzen, for example, considers the gaps in the narrative of *Beowulf* to be "sites for reading and writing,"⁴⁶ focusing on the way readers of the poem create meaning in such spaces. Similarly, in James W. Earl's psychoanalytic approach to *Beowulf*, he considers such gaps and silences as places where readers "read [them] selves" in the narrative.⁴⁷ Earl focuses on the reader's desire and applies the

psychoanalytic approach not to the poem itself, but rather to the readers' interactions with the poem, noting how the poem becomes "a screen for our projections" and aligning the silences in the narrative with "the silence of the analyst."⁴⁸ Akin to Earl's focus on how readers' desires interact with moments of narrative discontinuity, Gillian Overing too notes that it can be "difficult to separate text from reader, to disentangle the workings of desire within the reader from those operating within the narrative."⁴⁹ These scholars are writing about *Beowulf*,⁵⁰ but their concern with how the desire of the reader intersects with gaps and silences in narrative can be extended to the products fans create in response to texts like Tolkien's fiction. Tolkien wrote that his creation of Middle-earth would "leave scope for other minds and hands, wielding paint and music and drama,"⁵¹ which would appear to give license to the creations of fans.⁵² One imagines that slash fanfiction is not what Tolkien had in mind, but it is clearly in the minds of a good portion of his readers.

Other possible avenues for scholars interested in the queer in Tolkien utilize a broader concept of the queer than just the sexual, as the division of essays in this overview proposes. Already suggested are the possibilities offered by the work of Emmanuel Lévinas. Another might be suggested by the work of Tison Pugh, who brings queer theory together with genre criticism. In his *Queering Medieval Genres*, he looks at the propensity for the queer to subvert genre expectations.⁵³ He is utilizing a broader definition of the queer, advocating "a widened view of the implications of medieval queerness beyond the somewhat limited arena of sexual conduct."⁵⁴ He is focused on "medieval queerness" where the scholarship discussed here is on Tolkien, but given the presence of the medieval in Tolkien, the observations are perhaps more relevant than might at first appear. Pugh offers a definition of the queer taken from Richard Zeikowitz, a definition very much in line with what this essay suggests: "Queer" can thus signify any nonnormative behavior, relationship, or identity occurring at a specific moment. It may also describe an alternative form of desire that threatens the stability of the dominant norm."⁵⁵

Pugh is concerned with the propensity of the queer to destabilize narrative, observing that "through the introduction of the queer, previously marginalized agents radically reconfigure the parameters of subject and object inside and outside the narrative, both for the textual world created within the genre and for the audience of that genre."⁵⁶ Pugh is working with medieval genres, but the generic instability of much of Tolkien's work seems to invite such an approach. Pugh suggests as much, expressing

his hope that “the hermeneutic of queering genres will likewise be of use to scholars of other historic periods.”⁵⁷ The question of genre is already a topic of concern for scholars of Tolkien’s work, as much of it defies easy categorization. To consider just *The Lord of the Rings*, it has been called an epic, a romance, and a novel, among other genres. It partakes of older genres at the same time it births a new one, high fantasy, while Tolkien himself called it a fairy-story. It also includes the fiction of being a translation of the Red Book of Westmarch, a translation of what are essentially the memoirs of Bilbo and Frodo. Pugh acknowledges “the great varieties of genres within a single piece of literature”⁵⁸ and notes that “a critical authorial strategy in queering genres (and thus obfuscating the promises of the genre contract) surfaces in the play between and among different genres.”⁵⁹ Tolkien’s work certainly demonstrates such generic play, and Pugh’s approach offers interesting possibilities when applied to Tolkien. As Pugh observes, “Queering genres ... allows us to see texts expand in directions unexpected and unexplored. As the conservative view of genre suggests, genres offer some constrictions, but, as the playfully queer view of genre highlights, they offer vast freedoms, subversions, and surprises as well.”⁶⁰ Tolkien’s work fits right in with this description.

As this survey of scholarship demonstrates, the idea of difference is central to Tolkien’s work and the moral lesson of *The Lord of the Rings* concerns attitudes toward the queer. Jane Chance defines the “ethical drama of *The Lord of the Rings*” as the “tension between the ‘normal’ and the ‘queer,’” posing the question as “How can individuals (and nations) so different from one another coexist in harmony?”⁶¹ She finds the answer in that very difference, for “where the difference of one ends, the complementary difference of the other begins. The relationship is circular and yet based on both need and desire, necessity and obligation, the dance of Self and Other, until the music ends.”⁶² This focus on the relation with the Other, the response to difference, and the negotiation with the queer remain abiding concerns for Tolkien scholarship as it moves forward.

NOTES

1. J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, 2nd edition (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987), I, i, 30.
2. Ibid., 29.
3. Ibid., 29, 30.

4. "queer, adj.1," OED Online, June 2016, Oxford University Press, accessed July 05, 2016, <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/156236?sk=QOP7Ov&result=2>, meaning 1.a.
5. Ibid., meaning 3.
6. "alterity, n.," OED Online, June 2016, Oxford University Press, accessed July 05, 2016, <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/5788?redirectedFrom=alterity>.
7. Helen Young, review "*The Body in Tolkien's Legendarium* (2013). Edited by Christopher Vaccaro," *Journal of Tolkien Research* 1.1 (2014), Article 5, <http://scholar.valpo.edu/journaloftolkienresearch/vol1/iss1/5/>.
8. See her essay in this volume, "Race in Tolkien Studies: A Bibliographical Essay."
9. Janet Brennan Croft and Leslie A. Donovan, eds., *Perilous and Fair: Women in the Works and Life of J. R. R. Tolkien* (Altadena, CA: Mythopoeic Press, 2015). Robin Reid's bibliographical essay is "The History of Scholarship on Female Characters in J. R. R. Tolkien's Legendarium: A Feminist Bibliographic Essay," 13–40.
10. Daniel Timmons, "Hobbit Sex and Sensuality in *The Lord of the Rings*," *Mythlore* 89 (2001): 70–79.
11. Ibid., 78.
12. David M. Craig, "'Queer Lodgings': Gender and Sexuality in *The Lord of the Rings*," *Mallorn* 38 (2001): 11–18.
13. Valerie Rohy, "On Fairy Stories," *Modern Fiction Studies* 50.4 (2004): 927–948.
14. Ibid., 944.
15. Anna Smol, "'Oh ... oh ... Frodo!': Readings of Male Intimacy in *The Lord of the Rings*," *Modern Fiction Studies* 50.4 (2004): 949–979.
16. Esther Saxey, "Homoeeroticism," in *Reading The Lord of the Rings: New Writings on Tolkien's Classic*, edited by Robert Eaglestone (London: Continuum, 2005), 124–137.
17. Ibid., 129.
18. Ibid., 131.
19. David Halperin, *Saint Foucault: Towards a Gay Hagiography* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 62.
20. Annamarie Jagose, *Queer Theory: An Introduction* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 131–132, italics original.
21. Jane Chance, "'Queer' Hobbits: The Problem of Difference in the Shire," chap. 2 of *The Lord of the Rings: The Mythology of Power*, rev. ed. (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2001), 26–37. The germ of this essay first appeared in 1995 under a slightly different title ("Power and Knowledge in Tolkien: The Problem of Difference in 'The Birthday Party'") as part of the *Proceedings of the J. R. R. Tolkien Centenary*

- Conference*; I consider here the version printed in the revised edition of *The Lord of the Rings: The Mythology of Power* (2001).
22. Ibid., 33.
 23. Jane Chance, "Tolkien and the Other: Race and Gender in Middle-earth," in *Tolkien's Modern Middle Ages*, edited by Jane Chance and Alfred K. Siewers (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 171–186.
 24. Jane Chance, "Subversive Fantastist: Tolkien on Class Difference," in *Proceedings of the Conference on The Lord of the Rings, 1954–2004: Scholarship in Honor of Richard E. Blackwelder*, edited by Wayne G. Hammond and Christina Scull (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2006), 153–168.
 25. Ibid., 161.
 26. Jane Chance, "'In the Company of Orcs': Peter Jackson's Queer Tolkien," in *Queer Movie Medievalisms*, edited by Kathleen Coyne Kelly and Tison Pugh (London: Ashgate, 2009), 79–83.
 27. Ibid., 95–96.
 28. Jane Chance, *Tolkien, Self and Other: "This Queer Creature,"* The New Middle Ages (New York: Palgrave 2016).
 29. Ibid., 5. Thanks to Jane Chance for making a version of her book in proof available to us.
 30. Jes Battis, "Gazing Upon Sauron: Hobbits, Elves, and the Queering of the Postcolonial Optic," *Modern Fiction Studies* 50.4 (2004): 910. Robin Reid discusses this essay in the context of race; see her essay in this collection "Race in Tolkien Studies: A Bibliographic Essay."
 31. Ibid., 915.
 32. Lucia Opreanu, "The Inescapable Other—Identity Transitions and Mutations in the Construction of Tolkien's Gollum/Sméagol," *University of Bucharest Review* 1, no. 1 (2011): 151–159.
 33. Ibid., 152.
 34. Jolanta N. Komornicka, "The Ugly Elf: Orc Bodies, Perversion, and Redemption in *The Silmarillion* and *The Lord of the Rings*," in *The Body in Tolkien's Legendarium: Essays on Middle-earth Corporeality*, edited by Christopher Vaccaro (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2013), 83–96. Komornicka quotes from Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, *Of Giants: Sex, Monsters, and the Middle Ages* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 26, quoted on 89.
 35. Benjamin Saxton, "Tolkien and Bakhtin on Authorship, Literary Freedom, and Alterity," *Tolkien Studies* 10 (2013): 167–183.
 36. Joseph Tadie, "'That the World Not Be Usurped': Emmanuel Levinas and J. R. R. Tolkien on Serving the Other as Release from Bondage," in *Tolkien Among the Moderns*, edited by Ralph C. Wood (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2015), 219–245.

37. Ibid., 226.
38. Deidre Dawson, "Language and Alterity in Tolkien and Lévinas."
39. Stephen Yandell, "Cruising Faery: Queer Desire in Giles, Niggle, and Smith."
40. "Cinema, Sexuality, Mechanical Reproduction: Peter Jackson's Saruman."
41. Thomas J. West, III, "The Exquisite Queerness of *The Hobbit*," *The Outtake*, April 2, 2015, accessed July 17, 2016, <https://theouttake.net/the-exquisite-queerness-of-the-hobbit-7c05ba5a1f60#.secpam930>.
42. *Fan Studies Network*, accessed July 17, 2016, <https://fanstudies.org/>.
43. Smol, 971.
44. Ibid., 972–973, 975.
45. "Race in Tolkien Studies: A Bibliographic Essay."
46. Allen J. Frantzen, "Writing the Unreadable *Beowulf*," chap. 6 of *Desire for Origins: New Language, Old English, and Teaching the Tradition* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1990), 182.
47. James W. Earl, *Thinking about Beowulf* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994), 168.
48. Ibid., 173.
49. Gillian Overing, *Language, Sign and Gender in Beowulf* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1990), xxii.
50. I discuss these authors and their concern with how readers create the poem in my "The Aesthetics of *Beowulf*: Structure, Perception, and Desire," in *On the Aesthetics of Beowulf and Other Old English Poems*, ed. John M. Hill (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 227–246. Tolkien's long interest in *Beowulf* is well acknowledged.
51. Letter to Milton Waldman, 1951. Humphrey Carpenter, ed., *The Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1981), 144–145.
52. One fan production space takes this quote in exactly this way, entitling their magazine *Other Minds*, a continuation of another defunct fan production *Other Hands*; *Other Minds*, accessed July 18, 2016, <http://othermindsmagazine.com/about>.
53. Tison Pugh, *Queering Medieval Genres* (New York: Palgrave, 2004).
54. Ibid., 5.
55. Ibid., 5–6. He quotes Richard Zeikowitz, "Befriending the Medieval Queer," *College English* 65: 1 (2002): 67–80, at 67.
56. Ibid., 3–4.
57. Ibid., 167, note 56.
58. Ibid., 14.
59. Ibid., 13–14.
60. Ibid., 20.
61. Chance, "'Queer' Hobbits," 34.
62. Ibid., 35.

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