

Editorial

"The monster", writes Judith Halberstam, "always represents the disruption of categories, the destruction of boundaries, and the presence of impurities... so we need monsters and we need to recognize and celebrate our own monstrosities".¹ This issue of *Philament* brings together a range of responses to the theme of monstrosity, which we hope will stimulate further discussion about its usefulness and flexibility as a critical term. The contributors to this issue have done a remarkable job of engaging with monstrosity as it has been represented in literature and culture, drawing out its inherent ambiguities using both creativity and critique.

Jessica Gildersleeve's "Monstrous Child: Rosamond Lehmann's Wartime Writing" discusses Lehmann's short story "When the Waters Came" (1946), focusing on its representation of war, children, and writing. Drawing on psychoanalytic theories of anxiety, Gildersleeve argues that Lehmann's story seeks to displace its own origins, problematically burying the monstrous child of war. Carolyn Burns explores the relationship between novel-to-film adaptation and vampirism in "Adapting the Undead: Vampires, Fidelity Criticism and Hammer Horror's *Dracula 1972 AD*". While discussions of adaptation often focus on the issue of fidelity between an original and adapted text, Burns argues for a more robust understanding of adaptation in which adapted texts bestow new meanings on their source material. Anna Wallace's "A Wild Shieldmaiden of the North: Éowyn of Rohan and Old Norse Literature" analyses the character of Éowyn in Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, positioning itself against the claim that the trilogy is sexist. Wallace compares *The Lord of the Rings* with the shieldmaidens from Old Norse literature that partly inspired Tolkien's trilogy, suggesting that the depiction of Éowyn is not motivated by sexism but a complex negotiation of history and gender. In "Monsters, Daemons, and Devils: The Accusations of Nineteenth-Century Vegetarian Writers", Atilla Orel combines personal reflection with critical analysis to articulate the difficulties of communicating vegetarian philosophy and politics to those with opposing views.

Daniel Wood discusses the republication of Nabokov's *Lolita* as a Popular Penguin in his excursion "The Literature of Monstrosity and the Monstrosity of Literature: Poetry and Paedophilia in Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita*". He suggests that

the strategies by which the novel allies its readers with its seductive narrator are far more monstrous than its representations of paedophilia. In "Strange Comforts: Bricolage for a Young Malcolm Lowry", David Large reassembles snippets from various donor texts to evoke the monstrous spectre of influence on the act of creation. Large's donor texts include Conrad Aiken's "Blue Voyage", Byron's "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage" as read by Herman Melville, and Lowry's letters, poetry and novels, adopting a similar method of appropriation to Lowry and producing a similar sense of unease.

We wish to thank all those who helped make this issue of *Philament* possible, especially those members of the collective who have now left us.

¹ Judith Halberstam, *Skin Shows: Gothic Horror and the Technology of Monsters* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), 27.