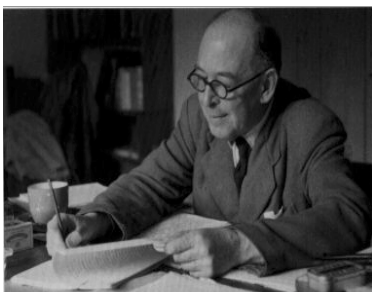


C.S. Lewis and Pacifism

by Robert Merchant



C.S. Lewis

Our topic this evening is C. S. Lewis and Pacifism. When I addressed this topic some years ago I dwelt more specifically on his essay entitled “Why I am Not a Pacifist.” This evening I will return to that essay, but first I want to spend a fair amount of time laying some groundwork for his thoughts.

I wish to begin by giving what I hope will be a concise, yet clear and fair understanding of what Pacifism is, what its sources and foundations are, and how Pacifists themselves define and defend their position. There are several varieties of Pacifists. Some are what might be called pure or absolute Pacifists, who say that all war, all violence under all circumstances is at all times morally evil and therefore forbidden. There is another variety which opposes war not because war is evil but because war *always* leads to a worse off position for the majority. Beyond these two sort of garden variety Pacifists there are others who renounce war as a preemptive act — such as our country threatens Iraq with — or as an act of aggrandizement, but this variety seems to recognize the need, the moral right, to resist when one is attacked.

In December of 2001, just following the events of Nine-Eleven, there appeared an interesting article in a magazine called *The American Prospect*. I’ve never heard of the magazine. But the article was entitled “Rethinking Pacifism: The Quakers’ Dilemma in a Time of War.” The author describes the scene at a Washington, D.C., Quaker meeting on the Sunday following the terrorist attack. One man, described as a longtime meeting member, speaking with an unsteady voice, said: “I find my Quaker peace testimony stretched to its limit right now. Quakers were able to resist joining the cry for vengeance in the twentieth century. But now here is Osama bin Laden and people like him, people who want to destroy us and all that we hold dear.” He continues: “I’m in a crisis of the soul. I don’t know how

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much further I can go along the road — the road of peaceful resistance.” And then another member of the group says: “If someone is sick enough to kill people, it’s not at all obvious to me that the way to be loving toward them is to let them kill people.” And a third man says that although it “tears him up inside,” he sees no way out but the current action (referring to the American action in Afghanistan.)

There are, then, varieties of Pacifism, but for our purposes this evening I want to stick with Absolute Pacifism. I do that because, for one thing, that’s the Pacifism that Lewis addresses in his essay. And then also it seems to me that anything less than Absolute Pacifism really becomes mainstream Christian thinking about just war theories and violence and resistance to aggression and the like. So I will be speaking about pure, unadulterated Pacifism, which I think is the kind most of those who call themselves Pacifists would embrace.

The roots of Pacifism are varied. By “roots” I mean those philosophical, theological, emotional or psychological underpinnings that dispose or predispose us to one thing or another, in this case, Pacifism. I don’t mean to suggest a pathological compulsion. Rather, I mean it in the sense that a retired Army drill sergeant is less likely to be a Pacifist than, say, a Quaker professor at Haverford College. But while the sources are varied, with just a couple notable exceptions they tend to be religious sources: Hindu, Buddhist, Shinto, Jewish, Christian. I’ve never heard of a Moslem Pacifist, but perhaps there are some. Bertrand Russell was one notable exception to this pattern, for he was an agnostic or atheist.

And then in modern times there has arisen a new mutation. Before I describe this Nouveau Pacifist, listen to some familiar words of Lewis from the first chapter of *The Abolition of Man*:

“Without the aid of trained emotions the intellect is powerless against the animal organism. I had sooner play cards against a man who was quite skeptical about ethics, but bred to believe that ‘a gentleman does not cheat,’ than against an irreproachable moral philosopher who had been brought up among sharpers. In battle it is not syllogisms that will keep the reluctant nerves and muscles

to their post in the third hour of the bombardment. . . . We were told it all long ago by Plato. As the king governs by his executive, so Reason in man must rule the mere appetites by means of the ‘spirited element.’ The head rules the belly through the chest — the seat . . . of Magnanimity, of emotions organized by trained habit into stable sentiments. The chest — Magnanimity — Sentiment — these are the indispensable liaison officers between cerebral man and visceral man. It may even be said that it is by this middle element that man is man: for by his intellect he is mere spirit and by his appetite mere animal. The operation of *The Green Book* and its kind is to produce what may be called Men without Chests. It is an outrage that they should be commonly spoken of as Intellectuals. . . . It is not excess of thought but defect of fertile and generous emotion that marks them out. Their heads are no bigger than the ordinary: it is the atrophy of the chest beneath that makes them seem so.”

This Nouveau Pacifist, to give it a label, is, I believe, a purely modern phenomenon, never before seen. Our modern Pacifist is characterized not by philosophical, psychological or religious convictions, but characterized rather by a moral paralysis or a moral vacuum. Whether paralysis or vacuum, I believe this helps to explain the anti-war headline “Yalie still fears judging even Sept. 11 terrorists.” He discusses how difficult Yale students found it to say that the events of Nine-Eleven were “bad.” Mr. Kelly recounts the story of a Yale student, one Alison Hornstein, who had written an article on the subject for *Newsweek* magazine. Perhaps some of you read it. I have not. All I know about the *Newsweek* article is what I read in the Kelly column. In the *Newsweek* article, Miss Hornstein describes the atmosphere following the attack. She writes: “But by Sept. 12, as our shock began to fade, so did our sense of being wronged. Student reactions expressed in the daily newspaper and in class pointed to the differences between our life circumstances and those of the perpetrators, suggesting that these differences had caused the previous day’s events. Noticeably absent was a general outcry of indignation at what had been the most successful terrorist attack of our lifetimes. These reactions and similar ones on other campuses have

made it apparent that my generation is uncomfortable assessing, or even asking, whether a moral wrong has taken place.”

Whether Alison Hornstein and her fellow Yale students consider themselves Pacifists isn't made clear in the quotation from the Kelly newspaper article. I mention that situation because the paralysis which has so impaired their moral faculties results in a form of Pacifism, whether they would call it that or not. These people seem, to me at least, the very personification of Lewis's vivid words, that “It is not excess of thought but defect of fertile and generous emotion that marks them out. Their heads are no bigger than the ordinary: it is the atrophy of the chest beneath that makes them seem so.” Indeed, they are Men and Women Without Chests.

But having said all that, I intend now to ignore them, not because they may not be worth examining, but because that is not the absolute and intentional, studied Pacifism that I want to address this evening, nor is it the type which Lewis addresses.

Christian Pacifism tends to base itself on certain biblical texts. One Pacifist writer, Don Murphy, wrote a very persuasive and well thought out article for the *Anabaptist Church* entitled, “Can a Christian be a pacifist?” 1/19/1985. He says: “Jesus appears to teach pacifism when he told his disciples: ‘Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. . . Do not resist the evil man but whoever slaps you on the right cheek turn to him the other also. And if anyone wants to sue you for your shirt, let him have your coat as well. Love your enemies. Give to everyone who asks you; when a man takes what is yours, do not demand it back.’” He goes on: “Jesus declared that the life of the Christian will be different than the life of the Old Testament Jew. One of the areas of change is in the Christian's relations with other people. Love is now to be the overriding concern. He said, ‘You have learned that our forefathers were told, ‘Do not commit murder; anyone who commits murder must be brought to judgement.’ But what I tell you is this: Anyone who nurses anger against his brother must be brought to Judgement. If he abuses his brother he must answer for it to the court; if he sneers at him he will have to answer for it in the fires of hell.’ Jesus does not even allow a Christian to be angry with someone! (Mt. 5:21-24) What then will He do with

those who kill?”

And then Mr. Murphy examines the Patristic evidence. He makes this unabashed statement: “The early church took these teachings of Jesus and the apostles very seriously. Guided by the Holy Spirit, they were strong pacifists.” He tells us that early Christians could not be judges nor soldiers, as this would place them in positions where they may be responsible for taking someone's life. He quotes Roland Bainton, the noted Yale church historian, that “From the end of the New Testament period to the decade 170-180 there is no evidence whatever of Christians in the army. All of the East and West,” continues Professor Bainton,” repudiated participation in warfare for Christians.” Murphy quotes Tertullian, that “Only without the sword can the Christian wage war: for the Lord has abolished the sword.” And Justin Martyr: “We have exchanged our swords for ploughshares, our spears for farm tools.” And Hippolytus in 218 A.D., who said that soldiers who become Christians are not allowed to kill and must refuse to obey orders to kill. Mr. Murphy concludes this section with the observation that pacifism did not survive the Conversion of Constantine. He tells us that: “By the year 314 A.D., the church was excommunicating military deserters without any consideration of the motives for desertion.” Let me add here that I haven't authenticated Murphy's quotations. I'm assuming they are accurate, and they are given here, of course, without context which could alter their meaning quite significantly. Let me also note in passing that my own reading of early Christian teaching and practices suggests that pre-Constantinian Christians (i.e., before 312 A.D.) Refused to be soldiers not because it required killing, but rather because being a soldier in the Roman army required a soldier to make an allegiance to the Emperor as a divine or semi-divine being.

In any case, there we have an articulate and cogent presentation and defense of Christian Pacifism. We will consider these claims later. But let me close this section with another quotation from Lewis, this time from *Mere Christianity*, Book III, Chapter 7:

“Does loving your enemy mean not punishing him? No, for loving myself does not mean that I ought not to subject myself to punishment — even to death. If one had committed a murder, the right Christian thing

to do would be to give yourself up to the police and be hanged. It is, therefore, in my opinion, perfectly right for a Christian judge to sentence a man to death or a Christian soldier to kill an enemy. I always have thought so, ever since I became a Christian, and long before the war, and still think so now that we are at peace. It is no good quoting ‘Thou shalt not kill.’ There are two Greek words: the ordinary word to *kill* and the word to *murder*. And when Christ quotes that commandment He uses the *murder* one in all three accounts, Matthew, Mark, and Luke. And I am told there is the same distinction in Hebrew. All killing is not murder any more than all sexual intercourse is adultery. When soldiers came to St. John the Baptist asking what to do, he never remotely suggested that they ought to leave the army; nor did Christ when He met a Roman sergeant-major — what they called a centurion. . . . We may kill if necessary, but we must not hate and enjoy it.”

I want to turn now to the Bible, the Old and New Testaments. Christian Pacifism relies very heavily upon a variety of biblical quotations. There are many passages which, indeed, have the ring of pacifism to them. We’ve heard most of them many times. The Fifth Commandment, “Thou shalt not kill” and its variant, “Thou shalt do no murder.” Isaiah speaks of beating swords into plowshares. From the New Testament the words and acts of Jesus are of supreme importance to Christians, none perhaps more piercing or more often quoted than the words from the Sermon on the Mount. “To him who strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also.” And yet, as we will see in a moment, when Jesus Himself had the opportunity to do just that, He didn’t. And here’s another remarkable thing. There’s not one Pacifist to be found in the entire Bible. Or if there is, I haven’t found him or her. And that includes Our Lord himself.

Let’s begin, then, a fairly methodical general review or overview of the Bible, the words and actions which bear on our topic. And let me stress that as we go along it’s very important that we look beyond mere words. We need to look at context, we want to get the smell of the times, try to find out how people actually

behaved, not just what they said. As Liza Doolittle says, “Don’t speak of love, Show me!” So we are looking for more than words. We are looking for an atmosphere, an attitude, an ambience.

First, as we have already noted, there is the Fifth of the Ten Commandments: “Thou shalt not kill.” We can almost hear the Pacifist say, “What part of ‘Thou shalt not kill’ don’t you understand?” “And,” our Pacifist continues, “not only does the Commandment appear once, it actually appears twice, first in Exodus, the First Law, and then in Deuteronomy, the Second Law. What’s your problem? And if you think it’s only the Old Testament that supports our position, here are some from the New Testament. St. Paul in Romans 12:19, ‘Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, says the Lord.’ And again, ‘Be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.’” “And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for those who cultivate peace.” (I Peter 2:18) “The harvest of justice is sown in peace for those who cultivate peace.” (James 3:18)

Thus speaks the Pacifist. Indeed, the Christian Pacifist bombards us, and rightly bombards us, with words that make us think.

The first, somewhat muted response to the Pacifist is this: “You quote the Commandment accurately, but the meaning you attach to it is more apparent than real. Both Exodus and Deuteronomy, invoking the great authority of Moses, do indeed command that we not kill. But as we look into the matter, we discover the words cannot have the meaning you attach to them. First of all, Israel had a death penalty, and there is nothing to demonstrate that the Old Testament Jews saw a contradiction between their death penalty and the Commandment not to kill or not to murder. And in fact, if you’ve read the Book of Deuteronomy carefully you will have come across the “Rules for waging a holy war.” As Lewis has pointed out in the quotation above, when Jesus refers to this Commandment, the word He uses at all times is “murder.” “Thou shalt not murder.” This strongly suggests acts of passion or revenge or hatred, not the mere act of killing.

In his book *The Everlasting Man*, in a

chapter entitled “The Riddles of the Gospel,” Chesterton has some interesting observations.

“[The new reader to the Gospels] would not find the ordinary platitudes in favour of peace. He would find several paradoxes in favour of peace. He would find several ideals of non-resistance, which taken as they stand would be rather too pacific for any pacifist. He would be told in one passage to treat a robber *not* with passive resistance, but rather with positive and enthusiastic encouragement, if the terms be taken literally; heaping up gifts upon the man who had stolen goods. But he would not find a word of all that obvious rhetoric against war which has filled countless books and odes and orations; not a word about the wickedness of war, the wastefulness of war, the appalling scale of the slaughter in war and all the rest of the familiar frenzy; indeed not a word about war at all. There is nothing that throws any particular light on Christ’s attitude towards organised warfare. . . .”

So speaks Chesterton.

But far and above all of this, the most profound problem for the Pacifist’s claim, at least insofar as the Pacifist claims to base his belief on Holy Scripture, is this: There is not one Pacifist to be found in the entire Bible. Not in the Old Testament, not in the New Testament, and that’s including Our Lord Himself. Let me interject here what I hope is obvious. But in case it’s not, then let me leave no doubt, that for all civilized people, Christian and non-Christian alike, war is a horror and a last resort. The only question we are considering this evening is whether it is an acceptable last resort, or whether we must, at all costs and at all times, stop short of it.

We’ve considered the Fifth Commandment. Let’s move through the Old Testament to the Book of Judges. The Judges of the Old Testament were not jurists, rather they were rulers or even warriors. They were sometimes consulted as wise men and women; for example, Deborah was sought out for her wise counsel. But the main work of the Judges was, in biblical language, “to visit God’s judgment” on the heathen. The Book of Judges describes the conquest of Palestine. But it was more than mere conquest. It

had as its goal the utter extirpation and elimination of paganism and polytheism, for “God is a jealous God.” Its intention was to make Palestine safe and congenial for the worship of the true God, leading to the planting of that Holy Vine in God’s Vineyard to which Jesus refers in St. John’s Gospel, when He says: “I am the Vine, you are the branches.” The point here is that the Jews saw no contradiction between their wars, their holy wars really, and the Fifth Commandment.

In the Psalms, we see a similar atmosphere, that whatever the Fifth Commandment may mean, it did not call for absolute pacifism. Listen, for example, to the opening verses of Psalm 144: “Blessed be the Lord, my rock, who trains my hands for battle, my fingers for war; My refuge and my fortress, my stronghold, my deliverer, My shield, in whom I trust, who subdues peoples under me.” And of course there is the infamous Psalm 137, verses 7-9. If you attend a church today which is at all attuned to modern sensibilities you’ve never heard the words uttered in church. Scholars tell us these words were written shortly after the Jews had been released from their detested Babylonian Captivity, which was around 530 B.C. Those verses read, in the King James Version: “Remember the children of Edom, O Lord, in the day of Jerusalem; how they said, Down with it, down with it, even to the ground. O daughter of Babylon, wasted with misery; yea, happy shall he be that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us. Blessed shall he be that taketh thy children, and throweth them against the stones.”

My favorite of the Psalms insofar as our topic this evening is concerned is Psalm 127. I bet you’ve heard it many times. But have you listened to what it says? Keep in mind that these words were penned by a pious Jew who was, presumably, well aware of the Fifth Commandment. I’ll read it first. Then, I’ll go back and emphasize a couple things.

“Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain. It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil; for he gives to his beloved sleep. Lo, sons are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb, a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the sons of one’s youth. Happy is the man

who has his quiver full of them! He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.”

Whenever I hear this in Church or read this in my private devotions, I have to repress a smile. Here, the Psalmist is lauding the man who has enough sons that he, the father, can beat up his enemies at the gate any ‘ole day. Listen again to the last three verses. “Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the sons of one’s youth. Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them! He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.”

Let’s turn now to the New Testament. There are many passages that would seem to shed some light, not always because of what they say but often because of what they imply. Take, for example, the arrest of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. From St. John’s Gospel we are told that, as the soldiers arrested Jesus, Peter took out his sword and cut off the ear of the high priest’s slave. Notice Jesus’ response: “Put your sword into its sheath; shall I not drink the cup which the Father has given me?” This is an argument from silence, I guess it would be called. But Jesus does not in any way condemn the act because it is an act of violence. Rather, Jesus condemns the act because it attempts to frustrate the will of the Father. The same is true in Luke’s Gospel.

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As Judas is about to betray Jesus to the soldiers, the Apostles said: “Lord, shall we strike with the sword?” Again, notice that Jesus’ response makes no reference to the Fifth Commandment nor does He say not to resort to the sword. Chesterton is right. Rather enigmatically, he simply says: “No more of this!” and proceeds to restore the maimed slave. And then, to continue our journey through the Bible, there’s the last Book, The Revelation. The 12th chapter tells us that “There was war in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they were defeated. . . .” Again, the image is presented to us of good “fighting,” not yielding to evil.

This brings us to one of the most quoted passages of the entire Bible, Our Lord’s words from the Sermon on the Mount. “To him who strikes you on the right cheek, offer the other also.” As Romano Guardini has pointed out, whatever that might mean, the remarkable fact is that when Jesus Himself was struck during the trial before Caiaphas, He did not turn the other cheek. Let me refresh your memories on the circumstances of that occasion. Jesus was being interrogated by the high priest, Caiaphas. Caiaphas asks: Just what are your teachings? Jesus does not give a direct answer. He answers somewhat obliquely. “I’ve spoken openly. I’ve always taught in the synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews congregate.” And then Jesus uses very strong, pointed language. It’s easy to read this passage and lose the force of Our Lord’s words. Let me read it and put the emphases where I think they should be. Here’s what He says: “Why do you ask ME? Ask those who have heard me, what I said to them; THEY know what I said.”

The Bible then tells us this. When He said those words, one of the officers standing nearby struck Jesus with his hand. “Is that how you answer the high priest?” the officer demands. It seems clear the officer has struck Him on the cheek. But Jesus does NOT turn the other cheek. No. He goes on the offensive. Just as He spoke fearlessly and sharply to Caiaphas, here the Word made flesh retorts: “If I have spoken wrongly, bear witness to the wrong; but if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?” To be sure, Jesus does not physically attack the officer. Was He handcuffed and shackled? I don’t know. But mincing no words He responds and retracts nothing. He is on

the offensive. He does not simply turn the other cheek. There are other passages we could examine. There's that curious one where Jesus says that He came not to bring peace but a sword. But enough has been said, I believe, to demonstrate that the Bible does not give the support to Pacifism that we are often led to believe.

Let's now turn to Lewis.

It's very interesting that Lewis's approach to the whole question of war and violence avoids the Bible altogether. Clearly he agrees with Chesterton, that the Bible is at best ambiguous and paradoxical, and that when we examine the passages Pacifists rely on, the passages don't hold up or don't have the weight the Pacifists assign to them. In 1940, Lewis spoke to a meeting of an Oxford pacifist society. Posthumously, the address was published by Walter Hooper with the title, "Why I am not a Pacifist." I don't know if that was the title Lewis himself used.

But, in any event, in the paper he begins by asking a question: How do we decide what is good or evil? The answer is the conscience. Now the conscience is not the Quaker Inner Light, a special faculty. No. Lewis defines it as "the whole man engaged in a subject matter."

Conscience can mean one of two things. It can mean the pressure which one senses that "X" should or should not be done; or, secondly, it can mean the content of right or wrong. When our conscience tells us that something should or should not be done, the conscience must be obeyed. But as to the content of right or wrong, we can be mistaken and often are. I'm not exactly sure what Lewis means by the "content of right or wrong." But let me give an example of what I think he means. The Fourth Commandment tells us to Honor our Mother and our Father. Does that mean never thinking or saying anything critical about them? Suppose my father was a womanizer and my mother spent half the family money playing Lotto? Is it a violation of the Fourth Commandment to hold critical thoughts about them for those actions? I think that's where content comes into play. I think that's what Lewis is getting at when he says content can be right or wrong. If I think it's wrong to think

critically about my parents, well then, perhaps that conclusion is wrong. That is one example of what "content" can mean. The important thing is that the content can change. We may be mistaken in believing that having critical thoughts violates the Fourth Commandment.

In any case, Lewis says that the way we educate or enlighten our conscience is analogous to Reason. Just as Conscience is the whole man deciding about good and evil, so Reason is the whole man deciding about truth and falsehood. Now Reasoning involves three elements: One, the reception of facts either directly from our own senses or indirectly from the reports of others. When we rely on others for facts we are relying on authority, and, Lewis tells us, most of the facts we rely on come from authority. Once we have facts to work with, the second step in the reasoning process is the mind perceiving self-evident truth; e.g., if A and $B = C$, then $A = B$; we might want to call this "intuition." Finally, the third step is the art of arranging the facts so as to yield a series of such intuitions to produce proof of the truth or falsehood under consideration. Correction of errors can occur only in Step 1, the factual stage, or Step 3, the lining up of the facts in a meaningful way. Intuition, he says, cannot be corrected. "You cannot produce rational intuition by argument, because argument depends upon rational intuition. Proof rests upon the unprovable which just has to be 'seen.'" You either get it or you don't.

Now this threefold pattern is also found in Conscience. First are facts, in this case the factual reality of what war and killing are; second is the intuition of good and evil; third arranging facts to convince someone that something is right or wrong. Finally, there is authority as a substitute for an argument, which a person will accept if he perceives the authority is wiser than he. There is, however, this important difference between Reason and Conscience. The middle element of which Lewis speaks, the unarguable intuitions on which right Reason and right Conscience depend, are liable to be corrupted by passion in matters of truth and falsehood. Even more, they are almost certain to be corrupted in matters of good and evil. For, as Lewis puts it, "we are bribed from the beginning." He doesn't say so, but I think he's thinking of Original Sin when he says we are "bribed from the beginning." There wouldn't

be anything for the Conscience to work on if we weren't already leaning toward doing the wrong thing. We must as humans be trained in obedience to the moral intuitions almost before we have them and before we are rational enough to discuss them, or likely we will be corrupted before the time for corruption comes.

A little earlier I read from an article by Michael Kelly on the Yale student. Let me read another section of his article, because it again demonstrates so well the very thing situation we are talking about here. Kelly writes:

“Hornstein is clear as to why she and her peers find it so difficult to judge: They were trained all their lives to be this way. Hornstein spent 14 years in a public school in Manhattan ‘with students who came from a variety of ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds’ being tutored in an ‘open-minded curriculum.’ ‘In second grade . . . she was taught that the Inuit of Alaska were ‘essentially like us,’ even though [as Kelly sardonically adds] they ate caribou hoofs. In third grade, a teacher instructed the class in a parable of violence — one boy kicking another — the moral of which was that the kicker ‘had feelings that sometimes led him to do mean things.’ In high school, Hornstein and her fellow students agreed that, although they personally found the practice of female genital mutilation abhorrent, they must accept it as part of the culture of other societies.”

And so we can see the dehumanizing influences at work throughout her life, the slow, silent removal of her chest.

After giving us a distilled lesson on the nature of Reason and Conscience, Lewis applies those principles to war. All agree war is very disagreeable. Pacifists, he says, would argue that war always does more harm than good. I must interject here that I'm not sure that's an accurate statement, that Pacifists believe that war always does more harm than good. Many Pacifists would argue that war is wrong even if it could be shown that a greater good resulted. Perhaps we can discuss that in a few moments. But Lewis does make that assertion. Next he examines

Intuition, and he spends little time on it. We are looking, he says, for a truth which no good man or woman has ever disputed; we are looking for a platitude. He concludes that the relevant Intuition here is that Love is good and hatred is bad, or that helping is good and harming is bad.

At this point Lewis analyzes the facts and intuitions just discussed. And the first thing to notice, he says, is that intuition can lead to no action unless it is limited in some way. That is to say you can not simply “do good.” You must do a specific good and you must do it to a specific man or woman or group of them. And, we should note, in the process of doing a specific good to specific people, we are, obviously, not doing it to others. “Hence from the outset the law of beneficence involves not doing some good to some men at some times.” Further, he speaks about “those rules which so far as I know have never been doubted,” which he enumerates as “to help someone we've promised to help rather than another, or a benefactor rather than someone who has no special claim on us, or a compatriot more than a stranger. And this usually means helping A at the expense of B: since B drowns as you pull A on board. But if B is up to mischief against A, then you must either do nothing (which goes against the Intuition that harming is bad) or you must harm one against the other.

From here Lewis moves to the killing which war necessarily involves. His logic is this. Let me give you some direct quotations. “The doctrine that war is always a greater evil seems to imply a materialistic ethic, a belief that death and pain are the greatest evils. But I do not think they are. I think the suppression of a higher religion by a lower, or even a higher secular culture by a lower, a much greater evil.” And let's listen carefully to these next words: “Nor am I greatly moved by the fact that many of the individuals we strike down in war are innocent. That seems, in a way, to make war not worse but better. All men die, and most men miserably. That two soldiers on opposite sides, each believing his own country to be in the right, each at the moment which his selfishness is most in abeyance and his will to sacrifice in the ascendant, should kill another in plain battle seems to me by no means one of the most terrible things in this very terrible world. Of course, one of them (at least) must be mistaken. And of course war

is a very great evil. But that is not the question. The question is whether war is the greatest evil in the world, so that any state of affairs which might result from submission is certainly preferable.” The art of life, he says, consists of tackling each immediate evil as well as we can.

At this point Lewis discusses Authority. From the dawn of history the world praises the righteous war. “To be a Pacifist I must part company with Homer and Virgil, with Plato and Aristotle, with Zarathustra and the Bhagavad-Gita, with Cicero and Montaigne, with Iceland and with Egypt.” He acknowledges that many will discount this universal acceptance of war on the ground of Progress, that now we know better, that the whole world was wrong until the day before yesterday. With such he says he can not argue because he does not share their basic assumption.

I know this is a bit tedious. If you have read Lewis’s essay on “Why I am not a Pacifist” it perhaps seems redundant; on the other hand, if you haven’t read it then it may be difficult to follow all that I am saying. But I think it’s necessary to give at least an outline of what Lewis says. The attack of Nine-Eleven and now the very real possibility of a preemptive strike on Iraq require us to think very deeply about these matters. After all, that’s what *homo sapiens* is supposed to do.

Lewis spends a great deal of time on Jesus’ injunction not to resist evil, to turn the other cheek. We have seen that Jesus Himself did not do that when He had the chance. So what does it mean? Lewis concludes that the Lord meant exactly what He says, “but with an understood reservation in favour of those obviously exceptional cases which every hearer would naturally assume to be exceptions without being told.” If a neighbor injures me I mustn’t do something back just to retaliate.

“Does anyone suppose that Our Lord’s hearers understood Him to mean that if a homicidal maniac, attempting to murder a third party, tried to knock me out of the way, I must stand aside and let him get his victim? I at any rate think it impossible they could have so understood Him. I think it equally impossible that they supposed Him to mean

that the best way of bringing up a child was to let it hit its parents whenever it was in a temper, or, when it had grabbed at the jam, to give it the honey also. I think the meaning of the words was perfectly clear — ‘Insofar as you are simply an angry man who has been hurt, mortify your anger and do not hit back’ . . . Indeed, as the audience were private people in a disarmed nation, it seems unlikely that they would have ever supposed Our Lord to be referring to war. [They couldn’t have gone to war if they wanted to.] War was not what they would have been thinking of. The frictions of daily life among villagers were more likely to be in their minds.”

“If Our Lord’s words are taken in the unqualified sense which the Pacifist demands, we shall then be forced to the conclusion that Christ’s true meaning, concealed from those who lived in the same time and spoke the same language, and whom He Himself chose to be His messengers to the world, as well as from all their successors, has at last been discovered in our own time. I know there are people who will not find this sort of thing difficult to believe, just as there are people ready to maintain that the true meaning of Plato or Shakespeare, oddly concealed from their contemporaries and immediate successors, has preserved its virginity for the daring exegesis which I have already rejected with contempt in my profane studies. Any theory which bases itself on a supposed ‘historical Jesus’ to be dug out of the Gospels and then set up in opposition to Christian teaching is suspect. There have been too many Jesuses — a liberal Jesus, a pneumatic Jesus, a Barthian Jesus, a Marxist Jesus. They are the cheap crop of each publisher’s list, like the new Napoleons and new Queen Victorias. It is not to such phantoms that I look for my faith and my salvation.”

We have looked, all too briefly, at what Pacifism is and how Pacifists describe themselves. I have tried to provide an overview of the biblical understanding of war and peace. We have now

heard from Lewis himself. Towards the end of his remarks, and remember that he was addressing an Oxford pacifist group. He uses some unusually sharp words: “. . . Pacifism threatens you with almost nothing. Some public opprobrium, yes, from people whose opinion you discount and whose society you do not frequent, soon recompensed by the warm mutual approval which exits, inevitably in any minority group.”

He admits in his closing words that he may be wrong. “It may be, after all, that Pacifism is right. But it seems to be very long odds, longer odds than I would care to take with the voice of almost all humanity against me.” And in one of the Screwtape Letters, Screwtape tells his nephew that the thing to do is to make the “patient” a fanatical patriot or a fanatical pacifist, it doesn’t matter so long as the fanatical pursuit becomes more important than the pursuit of holiness and goodness and truth.

If you are at all like me, your emotions pull one way and your intellect pulls another. My emotions say: “War is wrong! Anything but fighting!” But then my intellect tells me the exact opposite. I suppose each of us, pacifist or non-pacifist, must approach the subject with a large dose of humility, realizing, with St. Paul, that although we see through the glass, we see through it but darkly.

Evelyn Underhill is a name many of us know and respect. An Anglican like Lewis, she was able to reach across denominational boundaries and touch a lot of people. I have read that she was a pacifist although I’ve never read anything she wrote acknowledging that. For me, one of the most memorable things she ever wrote was this. She said that when we get to heaven the word we shall most use is “Oh.” If I might dare to add to that, I suspect that the phrase we shall most use in heaven, certainly with respect to topics like war and peace, is: “Oh. Of course!”



Robert Merchant has been an active member of the New York C.S. Lewis Society since 1972. He has presented many papers over the years and served as master-of-ceremonies at Lewis Weekends. Recently retired and living in Florida, he will travel north to MC our C.S. Lewis Society Weekend in August.



Letters

“You have done it again! John Granger’s article on Harry Potter is absolutely excellent. So, if you could send me five copies along with an invoice for costs, I’ll send a check. Has John Granger appeared in the Bulletin before? He should have!”

Roy Strickland
Murrysville, PA

“Enclosed is my subscription renewal for two years. I really enjoy reading about your meetings and now that I am retired I hope to have plenty of time to continue my interest in all C.S Lewis scholarship. God’s blessings for 2003.”

Sister Patrice Benson, SSL
Louisville Convent
Woodland Hills, CA



Letters

[The Rt. Rev. Kenneth J. Woollcombe was Bishop of Oxford, England, 1971-1978. Earlier, in the 1960s, he was Professor of Dogmatic Theology at the {Episcopal} General Theology Seminary in New York City. During one of his lectures, Professor Woollcombe told this story, which he clearly labeled as “apocryphal.” A panel of clergy and theologians was gathered to discuss various matters before a lay audience. During a question and answer session, someone asked the question: “What is the single most important belief that distinguishes Christianity from all other religions?” The Panel was unable to answer the question. So Lewis, who was in the audience, said: “If you will allow a layman to respond to the question, I think the answer is clear. The belief that distinguishes Christianity from all other religions is belief in the forgiveness of sins.” This is the “story” to which the Bishop refers in the quotation below. Please note that this is an excerpt from his letter to me.

Robert Merchant]

The Bishop of Oxford
December 30, 1971

“The C.S. Lewis story (which you have quoted accurately) comes, I think, from one of the Oxford University missions either just before or just after WWII, but it’s not the kind of story that can be fitted out with academic verifications. Like the nativity narratives in Mark and Luke, it’s a well-known legend (in the best sense) but quite impossible to verify.

“I recall meeting C. S. Lewis in Cambridge when I spent a sabbatical there in 1959, and he visited Westcott House for a conversazione. To my surprise he was most insistent that clergymen should not preach on, e.g., the Miracle at Cana, without first declaring whether they believed it to be true or untrue. He was unable to accept a plea from one member of the audience that it should be regarded as a legend! Perhaps therefore he would be equally unable to accept some of the legends that have been told about himself!”

FUTURE MEETINGS

Feb. 14 **The Three Phases of Joy Davidman**
by Clara Sarrocco

Mar. 14 **The Letters of Dorothy L. Sayers**
“Revisited”
by Margaret Goodman

Apr. 11 **C.S. Lewis On Humility**
by Kevin Offner

May 9 **George MacDonald: Merging**
Myth and Method
by Robert Trexler

June 13 *An Experiment in Criticism*
moderated by Charles Beach

July 11 **From The Floor**
moderated by James Como

We meet at 7:30 in the Parish House of The Church of the Ascension at 12 West 11th Street, Manhattan. Call 1 (212) 254-8620 after noon on the meeting day if there is a question of possible cancellation. On the block of the Parish House, on-street parking is legal all day (alternate side rules apply). On some nearby blocks, parking becomes legal at 6:00. Nearby subway stations are at 14th Street and 6th Avenue (F and V trains) and 14th Street Union Square (many trains 4, 5, 6, N, R, L, Q, W). The Strand Bookstore, dealing in second hand books, is nearby (corner of Broadway and 12th Street.) ALL ARE WELCOME.



Bits and Pieces

Tolkien fans around the world toasted the author on January 3rd, which would have been his "eleventy-first" birthday. This is the famous age of Bilbo Baggins which is celebrated in the birthday party scene which begins the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy. One Tolkien web-site suggested the following toast from Tolkien's writings, "Mourn not overmuch! Mighty was the fallen, meet was his ending." Tolkien was born in 1893 and died in 1973. Due to the recent movies, his books are selling more than ever.

An edition of Tolkien's essay "Beowulf and the Critics" based on his 1936 lecture, was published in December 2002 by Professor Michael Drout after obtaining permission of the Tolkien estate. In the summer of 2003, Drout will publish more Tolkien material found during his research at the Bodeian Library in Oxford. The new book will include Tolkien's translation and line-by-line appraisal of Beowulf, the epic 8th century Anglo-Saxon poem of bravery, friendship and monster slaying that is thought to have inspired the *Lord of the Rings*.

Society member Dr. William Luther White presented a series of four lectures last Fall on the theme of "Encountering C.S. Lewis." The well-attended programs were sponsored by First United Methodist Church in Normal, IL. The presentations were: "The Gospel According to C.S. Lewis", "Human Destiny: The Grand Perspective of C.S. Lewis", "Myth, Metaphor, and Meaning"; and "C.S. Lewis, Science and Science Fiction." Dr. White is professor emeritus at Illinois Wesleyan University, Bloomington, IL.

He is the author of "The Image of Man in C.S. Lewis," (1969) which was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize.

The C.S. Lewis Society of Kansas held a conference Nov. 8-10, 2002 at the University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas. Their theme was "Story as Truth." Dr. James R. Powell Associate Professor of Chemistry at Ivy Tech State College in South Bend, Indiana gave the keynote address: "The History of Science, Myth and the Search for Truth." Ten other focus sessions were offered including "Lewis in Wartime", "Myth as Theological Reflection", and "Lewis and the L'Abri Movement." The video documentary "The Magic Never Ends" was shown and a "Reading Theatre" performance of *The Great Divorce* was performed again at this year's conference by popular demand.

From June 8-14, 2003, Louis Markos, Professor in English and C. S. Lewis scholar, will be delivering a series of lectures on *The Chronicles of Narnia* to accompany a Spa trip held in Aspen, Colorado. The Spa is coordinated by Global Fitness Adventures. To learn more about this opportunity, or to learn more about Dr. Markos's credentials and his work on C. S. Lewis, visit his website at <http://fc.hbu.edu/~lmarkos>. Those who can't afford a Spa trip to Aspen are encouraged to hear Dr. Markos at the NYCSL Society Symposium in August.

March 9 - April 2003 - Four Churches in Augusta, Georgia are hosting a C.S. Lewis festival. This will be an event for all ages. For more information, contact Dr. Roger Murchison, First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 14489 Augusta, GA 30919 (706) 733-2236.

Actor Tony Lawton will perform his one-man play of *The Great Divorce* at the NYCSL Society Symposium this August. The flyer enclosed with this issue was printed before we could include this information.

*Surprised by C. S. Lewis, George MacDonald, and Dante:
An Array of Original Discoveries.*

by Kathryn Lindskoog.
Macon, GA: Mercer UP, 2001.
ISBN: 0865547289 \$35 hc, 224 pages.

reviewed by Charles Franklyn Beach



In a book that ranges from serious academic scholarship to whimsical insights into literature, Lindskoog presents some “simple pleasures,” “hidden connections,” and “sage observations.” Some of the material seems a bit self-indulgent, such as the admitted pastiche “The Splendid Lands,” written in imitation of Lewis’ story “The Shoddy Lands.” But on the whole, Lindskoog’s work in this volume tends more toward the insightful and illuminating, as she gathered together 23 separate essays previously published in journals, including our society’s Bulletin.

Especially intriguing are the essays in the “Hidden Connections” section, in which Lindskoog does one of the primary things a literary scholar should do: draw connections between writers and ideas, showing how a writer (Lewis, in this case) was influenced by and/or linked to other writers, including MacDonald, Dante, Sadhu Sundar Singh, John Updike, Mark Twain, and Dorothy L. Sayers. Some of the connections she makes are not unfamiliar, such as the link between Mark Twain and George MacDonald, which is spelled out in some detail in Greville MacDonald’s memoir of his father. But the analysis of Lewis’ portrayals in *The Great Divorce* that suggest his opposition to anti-Semitism is enlightening, as it

points to the significance of details that today’s reader would not immediately recognize. And as someone who teaches Dante to college students, I particularly appreciated her insights in “Mining Dante: *Divine Comedy* Discoveries for Everyone.”

Although the author of some fine studies on Lewis, including a valuable book-length analysis of *The Pilgrim’s Regress*, Lindskoog is often best known for her probing questions into the authenticity of some of Lewis’ posthumously published writings. In *Surprised by C. S. Lewis*, it is no surprise that the controversy pursues her in at least one essay, “Carved in Stone: What the Bird Did Not Say Early in the Year.” That piece, co-authored with Gracia Fay Ellwood and Joe R. Christopher, opposes the 1996 proposal that a “radically revised” version of a Lewis poem be inscribed in a memorial stone along Addison’s Walk.

While much of *Surprised by C. S. Lewis* would appeal to both literary scholars and general readers alike, some might be put off either by the controversy surrounding Lindskoog’s previous work or by the combined mixture of serious and light essays in the same volume. But there is much here that is worth mining—and that can be read for both learning and pleasure.

CSL Quotation

About everything that could be called “the philosophy of history” I am a desperate sceptic. I know nothing of the future, not even whether there will be any future. I don’t know whether past history has been necessary or contingent. I don’t know whether the human tragicomedy is now in Act I or Act V; whether our present disorders are those of infancy or of old age. I am merely considering how we should arrange or schematise those facts - ludicrously few in comparison with the totality - which survive to us (often by accident) from the past. I am less like a botanist in a forest than a woman arranging a few flowers for the drawing-room. We can’t get into the real forest of the past; that is part of what the word *pats* means.

Selected Literary Essays, “De Descriptione Temporum” (1955), para. 4 pp. 3-4

Report of the October Meeting

The New York C.S. Lewis Society met on Friday, October 11, 2002 at Ascension Church Parish House, 12 West 11th Street in Manhattan. Mary Gehringer opened the meeting at 7:30 and read a selection from *The World's Last Night* about the second coming. Marilyn Driscoll agreed to read a Lewis selection in November. A sign-in sheet was passed around and those attending introduced themselves. Announcements included a reminder that the November 8 meeting would feature Bob Merchant on Lewis and Pacifism and December 13 a reading of Dorothy Sayers' play, *Bread of Heaven*. Maggie Goodman passed out scripts, reminding all to read the entire play before December 13. There are many crowd scenes in this play which invite all other attendees to be extras.

The program now confirmed for the August 8-10, 2003, Lewis Symposium at The Immaculate Conception Center in Douglaston, NY features speakers David Downing, author of *Planets in Peril* and *The Most Reluctant Convert*, Crystal Downing, author of a forthcoming book on Dorothy L. Sayers, and Louis Markos, author of the audio lecture series *The Life and Writings of C. S. Lewis* and a forthcoming book, *Lewis Agonistes*.

Our speaker of the evening was NYCSL Society member Bill McClain, introduced by Mary as the two-time winner of CSL weekend Jackard Contests!

Bill explained that he was one of many Evangelicals who had been influenced by both Lewis and Francis Schaeffer, and thus his interest in the book by Scott Burson and Jerry Walls, *C.S. Lewis and Francis Schaeffer*. He described this book as deeply theological, detailing the similarities and differences between these two major apologetists.

Bill suggested that the Burson/Walls book contains an excellent summary of C.S. Lewis's theology, of interest to anyone in the Lewis camp whether or not the reader had an interest in Schaeffer.

Assuming that this group knew well the Lewis

biography, Bill concentrated on a summary of Schaeffer's life: born in 1912 to a working class Philadelphia family, a liberal Presbyterian background followed by a conversion to Biblical Christianity and then a call to ministry in the Bible Presbyterian denomination. He and his wife, Edith, served as missionaries to students in Europe, especially through L'Abri (means the Shelter), a retreat center in Switzerland. (Later during the question time several attending the meeting shared that they had spent some time at L'Abri in the 1970's.)

Schaeffer's ministry was at first talks and tapes, then books, with some 22 books published between 1968 and 1984. Titles include *Escape from Reason*, *The God Who is There*, *Christian Manifesto*, *How Should We Then Live*, and (a film with C. Everett Koop), *Whatever Happened to the Human Race*. The latter was the first major Evangelical outcry against abortion, and led to more Catholic/Evangelical contact.

Schaeffer had a blue-collar background, Lewis an academic. Schaeffer was not primarily a writer, hence his style is not as engaging as Lewis's. Schaeffer had a family (wife and four children) and Lewis remained a bachelor until in his 50's. Both Lewis with his Anglican background and Schaeffer in his Calvinistic/Reformed Bible Presbyterian denomination served as "bridges" in several ways. They shared emphases on orthodox Christianity, aesthetics, community, pastoral apologetics, and doctrine. Their views would not have been identical with regard to the detailed nature of substitutionary atonement and justification or the sovereignty of God and human choice. Lewis would not have shared Schaeffer's view on the importance of the doctrine of inerrancy, but both would have agreed on the primacy of scripture and the Bible's coherence.

Bill described the Burson/Walls chapters about the methods of apologetics as hard to understand. His general comment was that some of the differences Burson/Walls pointed out seemed to him less substantial than was argued by the authors. He suggested that what an individual could learn from

Lewis and Schaeffer would be Christianity's focus on engaging the mind, training the emotions, empowering the will, and restoring relationships. Burson/Walls applaud Lewis for his writing and Schaeffer for his thinking. Both Lewis and Schaeffer sought to give honest answers to important questions that people really were raising.

Crossway has published a five volume set, *Complete Works of Francis Schaeffer*. Bill used the index of this work to find that five times Schaeffer quoted C.S. Lewis, primarily from the space trilogy.

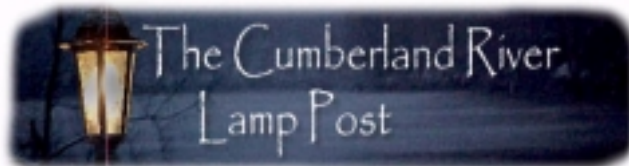
The group applauded Bill's cogent summary of a difficult book. Questions and comments included the thoughts that Schaeffer and Lewis shared a concern for true spirituality, engaging with people, that a life of obedience confirmed the life of the mind. A clarification was requested and obtained about universalism vs. inclusivism or restrictionism: "All who are saved are saved through Christ." One attendee had spent several months at L'Abri while in the U.S. Airforce and a church drop-out; he is now a

mainline pastor. L'Abri afforded the freedom and opportunity to ask questions and get answers. Another remembered the Schaeffer emphasis on "the true truth", perhaps foreseeing post-modernism. Others mentioned Schaeffer's son, Frankie, who had worked on his father's films and is now Eastern Orthodox. One attendee asked for a recommendation of one Schaeffer book: the answer, *True Spirituality*. Another recommended Edith Schaeffer's book about L'Abri.

We adjourned at 9 o'clock with informal discussion continuing over refreshments until 10 p.m.

Attending this meeting: Mary Gehringer, Claire Edwards, Mary Pixley, Catherine Kleinpeter, Marilyn Driscoll, Helene DeLorenzo, Bob Trexler, Bill McClain, Margaret Goodman, Dorothy Fabian, Richard Bridston, George Sanseverino, Joe Barbiero, Clara Sarrocco, Joseph D. Jerome, Douglas Estella, Eric Wurthmann, John Martin, Fred Herwaldt, Charles Beach, Joan Duncanson, Lori Pieper, Gordon Weston, Joe Sweeney.

Report by Marilyn Driscoll



New York C.S. Lewis Society member, Richard James, has a very informative web-site on C.S. Lewis. <http://www.crlamppost.org/cslewis.htm> Among other unique offerings, you can find these audio links to hear lectures and discussions about C.S. Lewis and even hear Lewis's own voice. Those with internet access will enjoy visiting his web-site.

1) Audio Programs on EWTN (real audio)

"Virtues: Charity/Love" - Benedict Groeschel discusses Lewis's *Four Loves* beginning 6 1/2 minutes into the program of 28 minutes (1/30/96).

"*The Abolition of Man* by C.S. Lewis" discussion with Timothy O'Donnell led by Deal Hudson for 50 minutes (8/18/97).

"C. S. Lewis" on Mother Angelica Live - discussion with Fr. Kenneth Myers on the life and works C.S. Lewis begins 8 1/2 minutes into the program of 57 minutes (3/14/01)

2. The Discovery Institute at Seattle Pacific University (real audio)

"C. S. Lewis & the Case Against Scientific Materialism" by Dr. Stephen Meyer (June 19, 2000)

3. Diane Rehm NPR Program (read audio)

"*The Screwtape Letters*" - discussion with Gina Campbell, Derrick Harkins, Patti Griffith, and Kermit Moyer led by Diane Rehm (3/21/00)

4. The Connection Forum in Boston (real audio)

"C.S. Lewis and *The Screwtape Letters*" - discussion with psychiatrist, Dr. Armand Nicholi and author, Kathleen Norris led by Judy Swallow (4/4/01)

5. Lewis's voice on .wav or .au files

From "Sounds Like Lewis" page at John Visser's Into the Wardrobe: The C.S. Lewis Website

Report of the November Meeting

The New York C.S. Lewis Society met on Friday, November 8, 2002 at Ascension Church Parish House, 12 West 11th Street in Manhattan. Mary Gehringer opened the meeting at 7:30. Marilyn Driscoll read Lewis selections from two letters written during World War 2 to Dom Bede Griffith. Eric Wurthmann agreed to read the Lewis selection in December. A sign-in sheet was passed around and those attending introduced themselves, including a first-time attendee who was a long-time member from out of town. Announcements included a reminder that the December 13 would be a reading of Dorothy Sayers' play, *Bread of Heaven* directed by Maggie Goodman. We were reminded, in line with our tradition, that 15 minutes prior to the December 13 meeting we would have the opportunity to sing Christmas carols on the front steps of 12 West 11th Street.

Bob Merchant announced that he has a card-file left with him by Hope Kirkpatrick who had noted all Lewis's references to music. He hopes to compile this in a way appropriate for sharing with others who are interested.

Bob Trexler announced that the November/December Bulletin had just been mailed. Its lead article is adapted from a 384 page book by John Granger about Christian themes hidden in the Harry Potter books. He also told the group that John Martin's poem, "The Cat on the Catamaran" has been published in an illustrated edition and should be available for \$13.95 at the next meeting. Bob mentioned a Lewis weekend in February in Ashville, NC and a new book by Dwight Longenecker, *More Christianity*, with a foreword by Thomas Howard; Bob described this book as a Catholic look at *Mere Christianity*.

Our speaker of the evening was long-time NYCSL Society member Bob Merchant, who has

recently retired to Florida but returned for the occasion of presenting his paper this evening on Lewis and Pacifism.

Following Bob's comprehensive and impressive presentation about the various definitions of pacifism and the views and opinions found in Scripture and in Lewis's writings, a group discussion followed which considered these questions: In "Why I Am Not a Pacifist", were Lewis's words about pacifism strong and sharp? Lewis had addressed this to a sophisticated and educated group at Oxford who could be expected to handle strong opinions. This was compared to his *Letters to an American Lady*, the opinions in which, by contrast, were soft and gentle. Is aggression contrary to Christian values? Some school librarians object to the fight scenes in the Narnia stories. Is objection to war always a moral issue or is objection sometimes a lack of values, a failure to admit something is evil? Mentioned in this connection were Lewis's *The Abolition of Man*, and Alvin Kernan's *In Plato's Cave* which deals with the erosion of values.

Attending this meeting:

Mary Gehringer, Robert Merchant, George Sanseverino, Gordon Weston, Helene DeLorenzo, Marilyn Driscoll, Trudy Friedrichs, Mary Pixley, James Tetreault, Juan Ryan, Bill McClain, Rick Bridston, Nancy Bridston, Joe Barbiero, Madeline Greenberg, Shawn Brown, Dorothy Fabian, Karen Wendling, Susan Wendling, Woody Wendling, Bob Trexler, Don Ferenz, Ann Ferenz, Al Bagdonas, Claire Edwards, Rosemary Mathews, Lori Pieper, Charlotte Patton, Mary Greez, Mimi Diaz, Heidi Ernst, Tim Jones, Linda Bridges, Clara Sarrocco, Eric Wurthmann, Holly Bagdonas, Charles Beach, Jim Kreuger, Phyllida Link.

Report by Marilyn Driscoll