



Friends of the Wade

The Marion E. Wade Center Wheaton College

Reviving the Wade Lecture with G.K.C.

The Wade Lecture Series, inaugurated in 1975 with a talk by Dr. Paul Holmer on C.S. Lewis, was originally conceived as an annual event, and ran as such until 1989. The goal of the lecture series was to educate the public about the seven authors of the Wade Collection (as the Wade Center was then known). With the ongoing development of the Wade Center's programming, other events such as conferences, seminars, reading groups, and dramatic performances have taken the place of the single lecture format. Nonetheless, we continue to look for opportunities to present an individual Wade Lecture in conjunction with our other events.

Accordingly, we are delighted to invite you to a 2008 Wade Lecture, as this year marks the one-hundredth anniversary of the publication of G.K. Chesterton's famous apologetic for Christian faith, the classic work *Orthodoxy*. To help us commemorate this milestone, Dale Ahlquist, President of the American Chesterton Society, will present the Wade Lecture at Wheaton College on October 23, 2008. The following day, October 24, actor and historian Chuck Chalberg will perform his one-man portrayal of G.K. Chesterton, capturing onstage the joyfulness and humor that pervade Chesterton's writings.

Gilbert Keith Chesterton, a prolific journalist and author, was well known for his apologetics, biographies, detective fiction, literary, social, and political commentary, and modern history. Possessing a keen wit, a comic genius delighting in paradox, and a gift for religious argument, he published nearly 100 books and over 4,000 newspaper columns and essays.



Chesterton wrote on many subjects, so his work still interests people in many fields, but he is especially known for his writings on Christian faith. One of his best-loved books, *Orthodoxy*, was first published in 1908 and has never been out of print since. It remains one of his most popular and most quoted books, a masterpiece of rhetoric and

sustained argument, and probably one of the most original and refreshing defenses of the Christian faith ever written.

While Chesterton was known and revered by many of the other Wade authors, some of his greatest impact was on C.S. Lewis and Dorothy L. Sayers. For example, Lewis was profoundly influenced by Chesterton's works, such as *The Everlasting Man*, before he became a Christian, and declared in his autobiography *Surprised by*

"An inconvenience is only an adventure wrongly considered; an adventure is an inconvenience rightly considered."

—G.K. Chesterton



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Tuesday, February 26, 2008 marked another historic milestone for the Wade Center. On that day I touched down in Beijing, China. Dr. Wayne Martindale, professor of English Literature at Wheaton College, who has been teaching in China at Beijing Union University for the past two years, arranged for me to give a series of seven lectures in five different venues. The topics included "J.R.R. Tolkien: The Man Behind Middle-earth," "C.S. Lewis in Plato's Cave," and "The Drama of Redemption: A Theological Narrative of the History of Salvation as Set Forth in the Bible." The latter two were delivered at Peking University and the last at People's University.

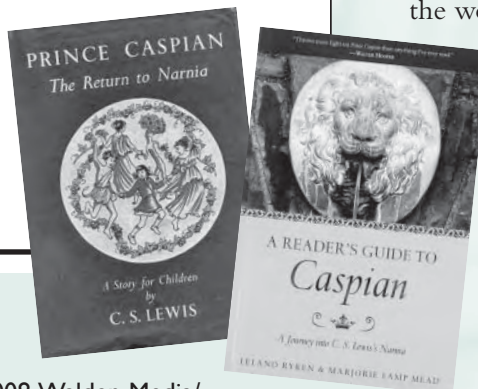
Peking University and People's University represent the Harvard and Princeton of China and are regulated by the Central Government. The fact that they opened their doors to Lewis's story and the biblical narrative of salvation seems to this man, at least, historically significant for both the Wade Center and Wheaton College. The response was equally significant in that the representatives of Peking and People's Universities, as well as Beijing Union, asked if I would be willing to return to follow up on what I had presented. One even wondered whether I could come back in May! Although I won't be going back in May, a door has opened for the Wade in China, and I am prepared to venture through it again.

WITH ALL GOOD WISHES,

Cory Mitchell

Did You Know?

Prince Caspian, the second Narnian story by C.S. Lewis, was first published in 1951. In May 2008, Walden Media/Disney will release a feature-length film based on Lewis's book and entitled *The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian*. In response to the ongoing interest in the Narnian tales, Associate Director Marjorie Mead and Steering Committee member Lee Ryken have co-written *A Reader's Guide to Caspian*. This book is ideal for use by reading groups, families, and individuals. It can be purchased at your local bookstore or in the Wade Center gift shop. **W**



Wade Lecture and G.K.C.

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Joy that "Chesterton had more sense than all the other moderns put together."

The Wade Center's Chesterton holdings include a variety of original and published items, giving researchers access to an incredible amount of material all at a central location. Documents in Chesterton's own handwriting include: close to 100 original manuscripts, a wide variety of letters to and from Chesterton and his family and friends in the Chesterton Family Papers (numbering around 2,400 pages), and nearly 100 pieces of original artwork by him, often incorporating his unique sense of humor. Published materials include: The John Sullivan Collection (the library of the avid Chesterton scholar and collector), first and various other editions of Chesterton's works (around 2,200 volumes), books from his personal library, close to 1,000 books about Chesterton, dissertations, periodicals, audio-visual materials, and over 4,000 articles by or about G.K. Chesterton.

Dale Ahlquist has a masterful grasp of Chesterton's vast oeuvre; he has been called "one of the most respected Chesterton scholars in the world." He has authored and edited several books, and lectured at major colleges, universities, and other venues around the world. He lives in Bloomington, Minnesota with

his wife and six children. In addition to leading the American Chesterton Society, Dale is host of the EWTN television series "G.K. Chesterton: The Apostle of Common Sense," in which Chuck Chalberg portrays G.K. Chesterton. Chuck is an actor and historian with a knack for capturing the essence of flamboyant historical characters. He is a professor of history at Normandale College in Bloomington, Minnesota where he and his wife and three sons live.

Details of time and place for these two Chesterton events will be forthcoming, but until then, we hope you find a chance to read and enjoy *Orthodoxy*, perhaps even in the Wade Center's beautiful Reading Room. **W**

Reading at the Wade

This year marks the Wade Center's fourth year of hosting the Saturday morning reading group that we call "Reading at the Wade." Over that time, facilitator Dr. Rolland Hein has taught seven sessions, each focusing on different works by one of the Wade authors. Dr. Hein is Professor Emeritus of English Literature at



Members of Reading at the Wade in winter of 2007 learn about Lewis's *The Abolition of Man*

Wheaton College, where he taught for thirty-four years. Though his special interest is in George MacDonald, he has taught many courses on other Wade authors.

The Wade Center is honored by his

generous contribution to our mission of making the seven authors' writings accessible to our community.

That community is always broadening. Reading at the Wade draws around 40 regular attendees; most come from Wheaton, but several come from Naperville, Lombard, Winfield, Northlake and other Chicagoland suburbs.

For some semesters, the group examines a single work; currently under discussion is George MacDonald's fantastical novel *Lilith*. At other times, Dr. Hein has chosen to make comparisons of multiple books. For instance, in early 2006 the group read G.K. Chesterton's *Orthodoxy* and *The Man Who Was Thursday* followed by C.S. Lewis's *The Problem of Pain* and *The Screwtape Letters*, thereby investigating the influence Chesterton had upon Lewis's understanding of Christianity and apologetics.

Reading at the Wade meets on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. and is open to all adults. The starting and ending dates of the current session along with a syllabus and study questions are posted on the Wade website. We welcome your visit anytime. **W**

Reading Group Member: Debbie Stojic

Debbie Stojic, of La Grange Park (about 18 miles east of Wheaton), has faithfully attended the Reading at the Wade groups for several seasons. She graciously agreed to answer questions for Friends of the Wade about her experience:

Debbie, how did you first decide to attend the reading group?
Dr. Hein and I attend the same church, Christ Church of Oak Brook, where he facilitates a reading group called Classics for Christians. Sitting under his tutelage for several years has both challenged and nourished me. His approach to literature and the great questions of life addressed in classic works often evokes a sense of spiritual wonder in me. So, when I heard he was leading a reading group at the Wade Center where works and artifacts of some of my favorite authors are housed—it was irresistible.

What are your favorite aspects of participating in Reading at the Wade?

My very favorite aspect of participating in the group is the richness of discussion that occurs because people from very different walks of life open up and share their thoughts and ideas about the texts under consideration. Which is the other most enjoyable aspect of participation—the books we read. The authors represented at the Wade Center have informed and shaped my Christian living to a degree few others have. I treasure the opportunity to reflect deeper with others and hear their points of view and what touches them.

Is there something particularly valuable you have learned through your attendance over the last few years?

What has been of particular value to me are moments of illumination about God, scripture, my life or just some concern I am having—as I am just reading along, or someone points something out. ...I can't tell you how blessed I feel to be part of the reading group. **W**

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Highlights



Tolkien Reading Day Celebration In observation of Tolkien Reading Day 2008 (March 25), the Wade Center sponsored an evening reading of J.R.R. Tolkien's short story "Leaf by Niggle," an imaginative exploration of the role of art in community and eternity. Dr. Christopher Mitchell (Wade Center Director) and Mr. Bob Shuster (Archivist, Billy Graham Center Archives) took turns reading the story aloud to students from the Wheaton College Tolkien Society, as well as other members of the Wheaton community. A lively discussion on the themes of the story followed the reading, and a good time was had by all, especially with the agreeable glow from the nearby fireplace. **W**