

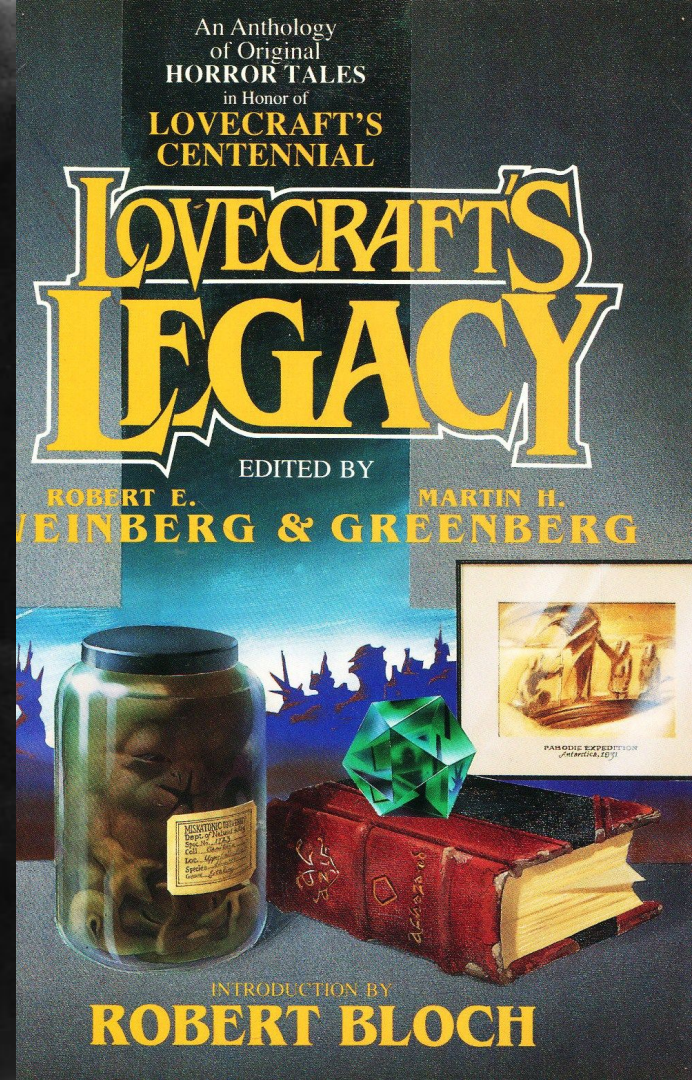


Lovecraft 101

The legacy of HP Lovecraft and the connections to A
Song of Ice and Fire

Today's topics

- Introduction to Lovecraft
- His influences
- His writings
- His collaborators
- His creations
- His death and legacy



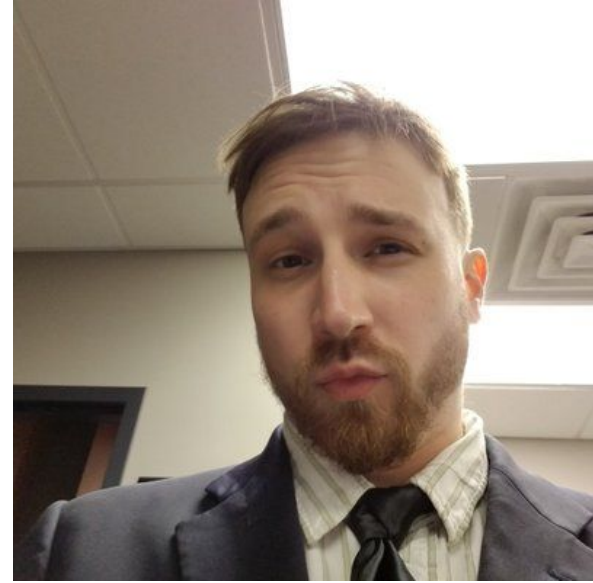
Who are we?



Silas Toms

[GodsOfTerror.tumblr.com](https://www.godsofterror.com)

Twitter: @loki_president



Emmett Booth

[PoorQuentyn.tumblr.com](https://www.poorquentyn.com)

Twitter: @poorquentyn

Early life of Howard Philips (HP) Lovecraft

- Born in 1890 to a wealthy family in Providence, Rhode Island
- His father was sent to a mental institution when HP was 3
- The father spent 5 years there, and may have died from syphilis
- HP's mother, aunts, and grandparents raised him
- His grandfather would tell him original 'weird stories' inspired by his travels
- His grandmother died in 1896, sending the family into "a gloom from which it never fully recovered"
- HP began having nightmarish visions of otherworldly beings
- He began writing stories around this time
- He hated seafood and had a life-long aversion to it



He recalls, at five years old, being told Santa Claus didn't exist and retorting by asking why "God is not equally a myth?"

Madness and sanity in the family

- His father had died when he was young
 - Died in an asylum
- Death of his mother
 - 1919, Suzie Lovecraft has a mental breakdown
 - She began to describe “weird and fantastic creatures”
 - She was committed to a mental hospital, the same one that his father had died in
 - She died in 1921
- He also had a failed marriage and move to NYC, which shook him



Influences - Writers



Algernon
Blackwood



Arthur
Machen



M.R. James



Robert W.
Chambers



Edgar Allen
Poe



Edward
Plunkett



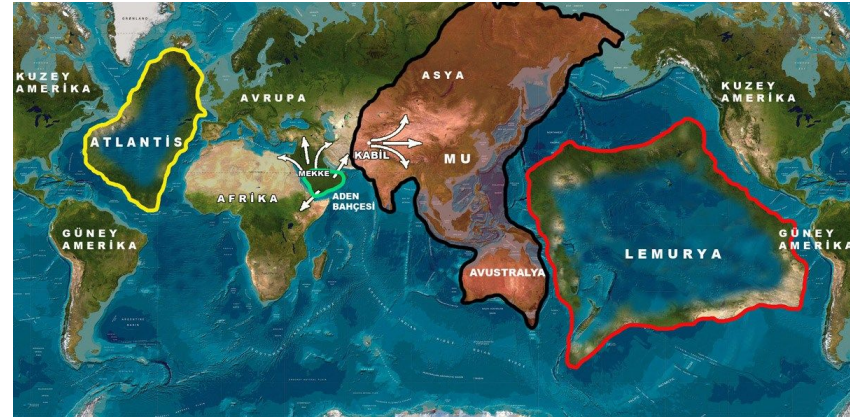
Ambrose Bierce

HP began reading early in his life, and absorbed stories of murders, mysteries, and of gods, devils, sea monsters, and aliens.

These stories influenced his writings and the Mythos that resulted

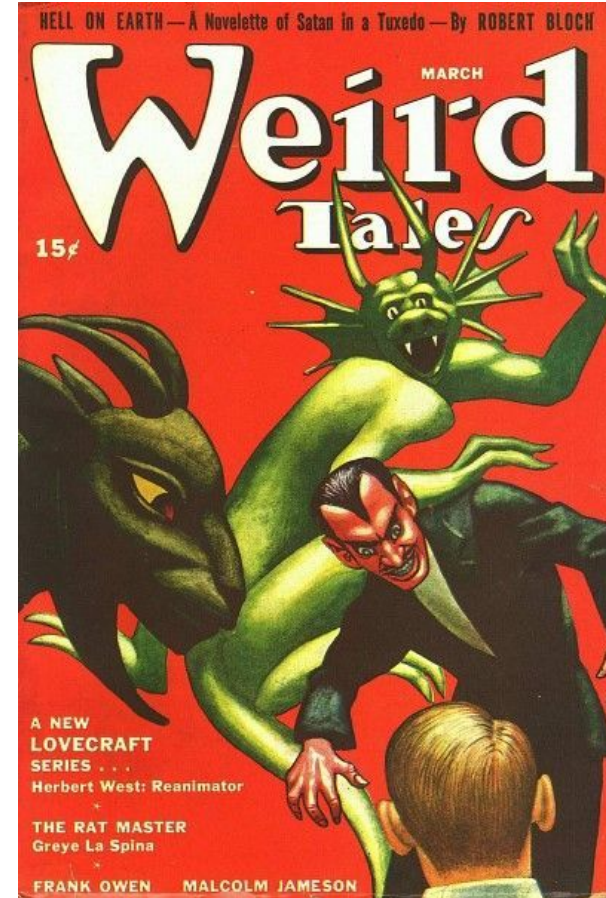
Influences - Sciences

- Lovecraft studied science, and loved astronomy
- Atlantis, Lemuria and lost continents
- Pluto and new planets
- Barlow - friend and anthropologist
- Expansion of the known universe and galaxy



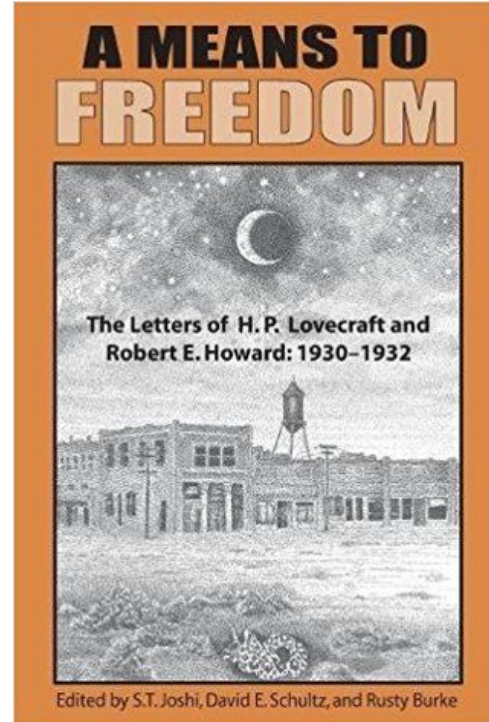
His writings and stories

- First published ~ 1920
- *Weird Tales*
- Ghost writing for others
- Collaborations
- Mostly unknown in his time
- Unfinished stories
 - Finish by Derleth and others



Correspondences

- He wrote thousands of letters to fans and contemporaries
- Many young fans wrote to him, and he encouraged their own writing and development
- Many of the writers he influenced, and their creations, became famous in their own right
- He allowed them to 'borrow' his creations for their stories, and they did the same for him.
- This re-use and recycling created the basis of the Cthulhu Mythos



Friends and contemporaries



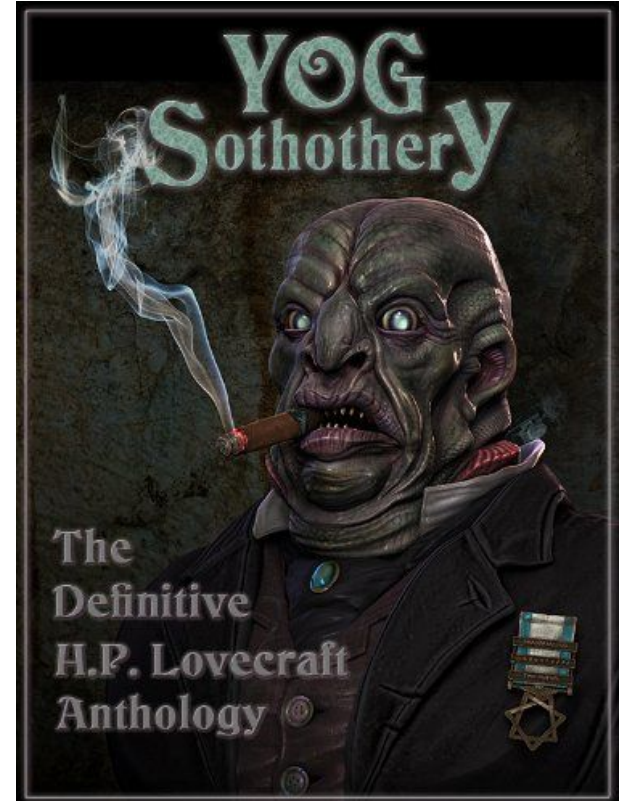
Though little known at the time, those who read his stuff would write to him, and he would write back

Through correspondence with them, he encouraged their dreams to become writers

His friends and fans became accomplished writers in their own right

Yog Sothothery, or the Cthuhlu Mythos

- Invented the concept of a shared universe
- Encouraged others to borrow his creations, and he did the same
- Through his correspondences with others, his Yog Sothothery developed
- August Derleth, one of his successors, coined the term Cthulhu Mythos
- Derleth also formalized the Mythos



Themes of the Mythos

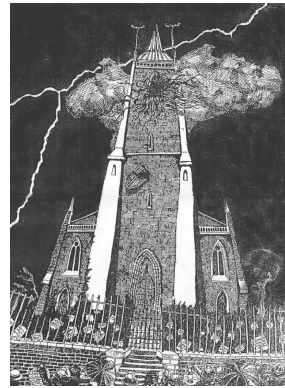
- Cosmic Horror
- Insignificance of Humanity and the madness that comes with this realization
- The gods have visited Earth before
 - Appearances of the gods inspire human religions
- Continental Rise and Sinking
 - Atlantis, Lemuria, Mu
- Different ages and heros and civilizations
- Sorcery to call the gods
- Blood Sacrifices
- Nyarlathotep wants to torture and destroy humanity
- Cthulhu is sleeping in the Pacific
- Racism

Racism

- Cultural Imperialism
- Racism
- Noble Savage idealism
- Seeing some races or cultures as backwards and “dark”
- He used names and phrases that are really unacceptable today

The Hunter of the Dark

- Robert Blake is the main character, a fictional version of Robert Bloch, who went on to write *Psycho*
- The Church of Starry Wisdom
- The Shining Trapezohedron
- Nyarlathotep, the Hunter of the Dark



Azathoth, The Blind Idiot God

Created by:
Lovecraft

Powers:
Dreamed the universe and everything into
existence. If he wakes up, the universe
ends

Appearance:

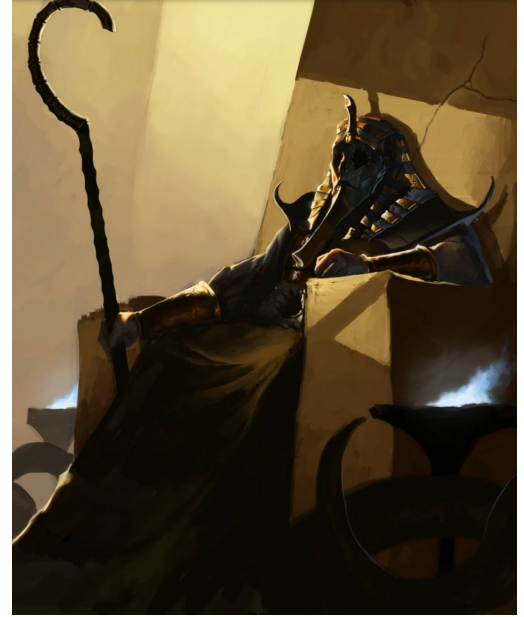


Nyarlatotep

Created by:
Lovecraft

Powers:
Helps men to destroy
themselves and the
world

Appearance:
Thousands of different
forms



Yog-Sothoth

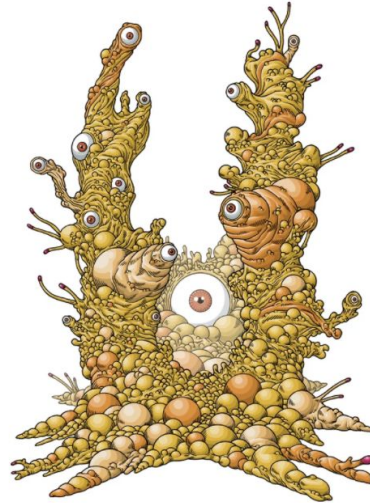
Created by: Lovecraft

Powers:

Visions, raising the dead,

Appearance: 1001+ glowing eyes
or orbs

“Yog-Sothoth knows the gate. Yog-Sothoth is the gate. Yog-Sothoth is the key and guardian of the gate. Past, present, future, all are one in Yog-Sothoth. He knows where the Old Ones broke through of old, and where They shall break through again. He knows where They have trod earth's fields, and where They still tread them, and why no one can behold Them as They tread.”



Shub-Niggurath, the Black Goat

Created by: Lovecraft

Powers: Gives birth to ungodly creatures

Appears to worshipers in forests when called by a blood sacrifice



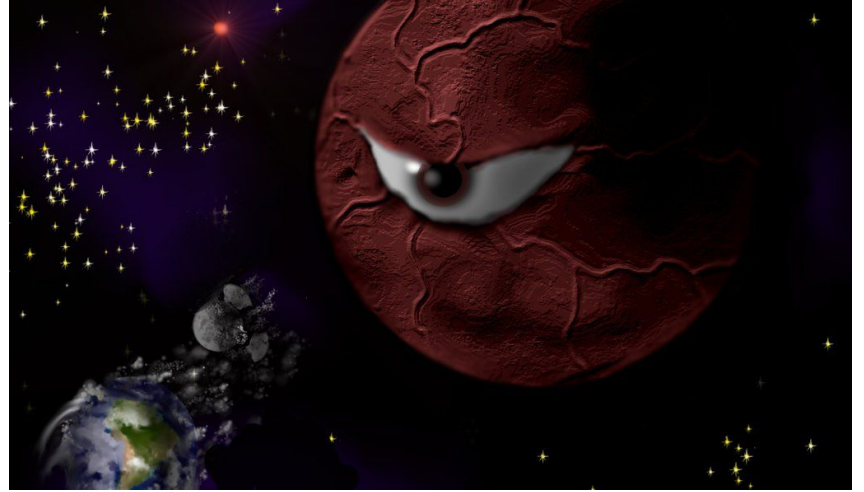
Ghroth

Created by:

Ramsey Campbell

Powers: Awakens magic and sleeping gods when he passes by planets

Appearance: Red comet/rusty moon



Ghroth (The Harbinger) resembles a rust-colored moon with a single gigantic red eye that it closes to avoid detection. It drifts throughout the universe while singing its siren song, The Music of the Spheres. **Any Great Old Ones or Outer Gods sleeping on a planet it's passing by are awakened by its call.**

Cthulhu

Created by: Lovecraft

Powers: Simply looking at him drives the viewer insane.

Appearance: Hundreds of feet tall, with a humanoid body, an octopus head, and dragon wings



Cthugha

Created by: August Derleth

Enemies: Nyarlathotep

Appearance:

Giant ball of fire



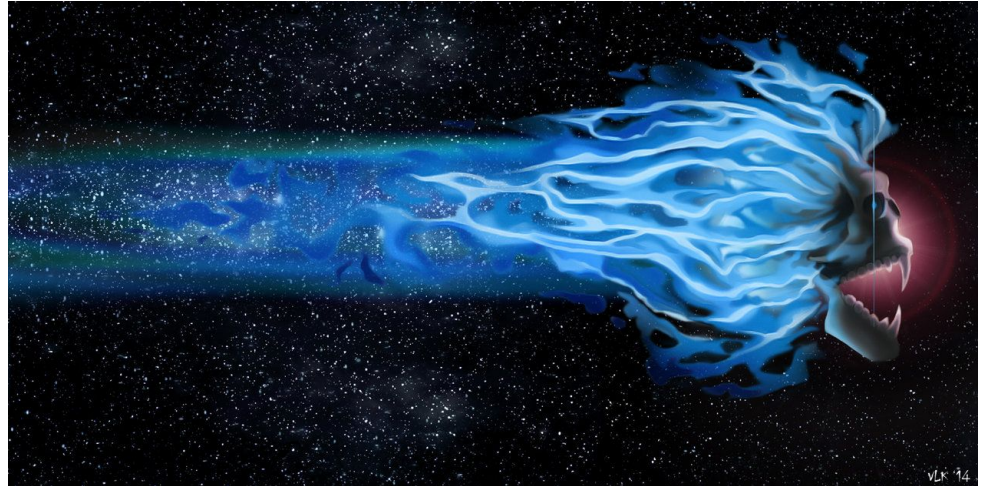
Aphoom-Zhah, the Cold Flame

Created by: Lin Carter

Only progeny of Cthugha, the
Fire God

Powers: Froze all the lands of the
northern continents of Earth

Appearance: an Icy, Grey Flame



Bokrug

Created by:

Lovecraft

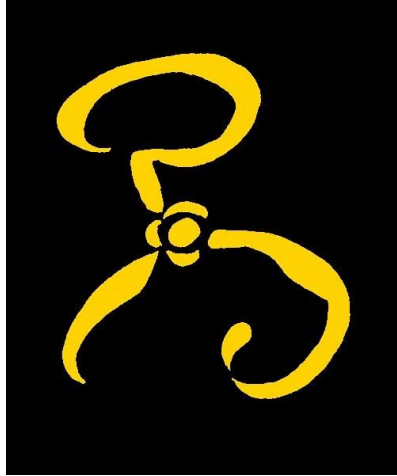
Appearance: a water beast that destroyed Sarnath



Hastur, the Yellow King

Created by: Bierce (as a Shepherd God), later expanded by others

Drives men mad



All who view his symbol (the Yellow Sign) are joined to him.



Tsathoggua

Created by:

Clark A Smith

Appearance:

Cross between
frog and a sloth



Atlach-Nacha and Yig

- Atlach-Nacha
 - Spider God
 - Human-like face
 - Came from Saturn
 - Invented by Smith
- Yig
 - Father of Serpents
 - Also called Set (Conan)
 - Invented by Bishop and Lovecraft
- The World of Ice and Fire mentions a battle between their worshippers



Deep Ones

- A separate, intelligent species who live in Earth's seas
- They procreate by mating with human women, creating hybrids
- The offspring appear human, until they become adults and they start changing
- Gills and scales appear
- Live forever if not killed, and keep growing
 - Many become scholars
- Worship Father Dagon and Mother Hydra
- Also worship Cthulhu
- Elder signs (usually runes etched in metal) are used to fight them



Elder sign-
Lovecraft
version



Elder sign-
Derleth
version

Other Mythos Characters

- Elder Gods
 - The gods of earth who protect it
 - Nodens
 - Ulthar
- Voormis
 - Kinda like the Children of the Forest
- Gnoppkeh
 - Kinda like the Giants
- Mi-Go
 - Ancient intelligent race who built the Shining Trapezohedron
 - Used black stone to build their cities

Bran Mak Morn, King Kull, and Conan

- Robert E. Howard is basically the father of sword and sorcery
- Bran Mak Morn was the King of the mythical Picts, who were seen as Noble Savages
- King Kull was a proto-Conan
- Conan the Barbarian was his most successful creation and lives on today

Lovecraft geography

- Arkham
- Miskatonic University
- Carcosa
- Sarnath
- Ib
- Leng
- Ulthar

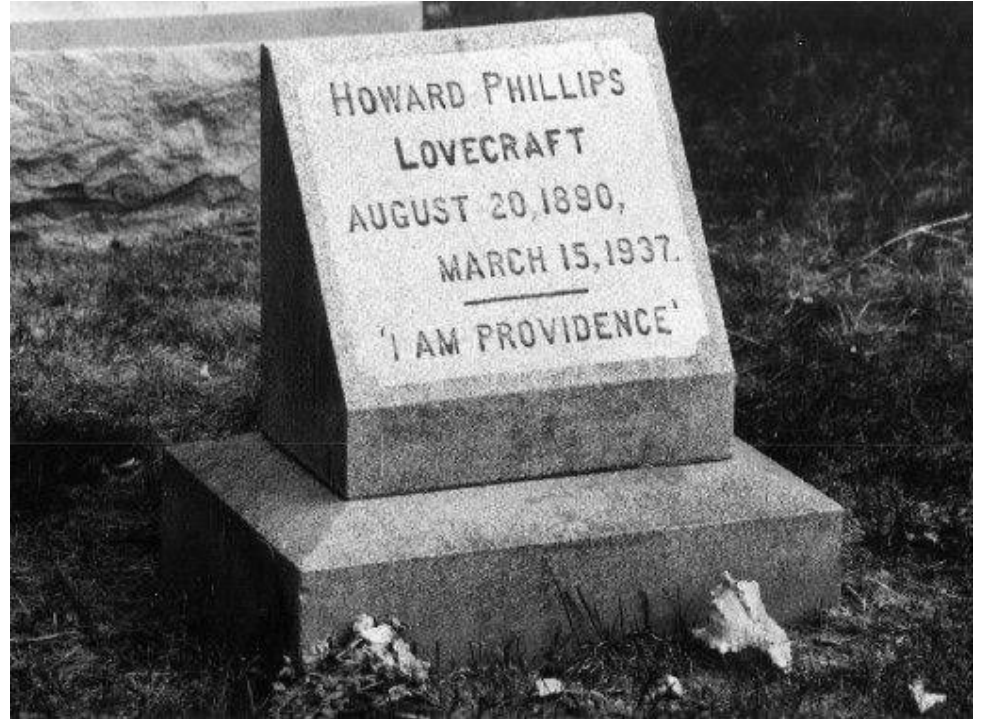


Death of Lovecraft

He died at 46 in 1937

Was nearly broke

Today, his gravesite is visited by fans often



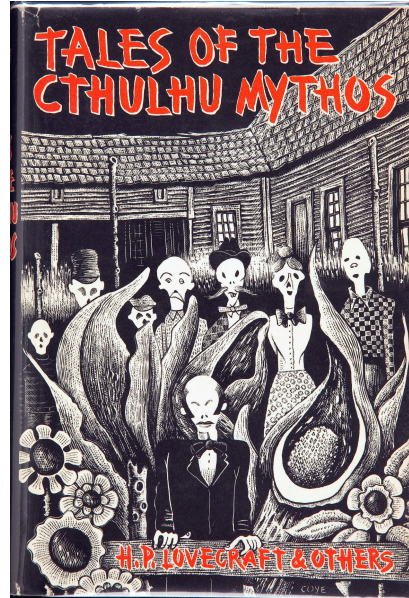
Legacy of Lovecraft

- His focus on a non-Christian worldview, of the cosmic insignificance of Earth and humans, was unique
- The gods and characters he created permeate pop culture
- His fears and visions of horror still resonate
- He inspired friends and contemporaries, who in turn inspired a new generation of horror writers
- Writers still emulate his style today

Arkham House and August Derleth

Kept Lovecraft's stories in print

Controversially formalized the Mythos



L. Sprague de Camp and Lin Carter



L. Sprague de Camp

Worked with Derleth, and edited the first fantasy anthology that GRRM ever bought

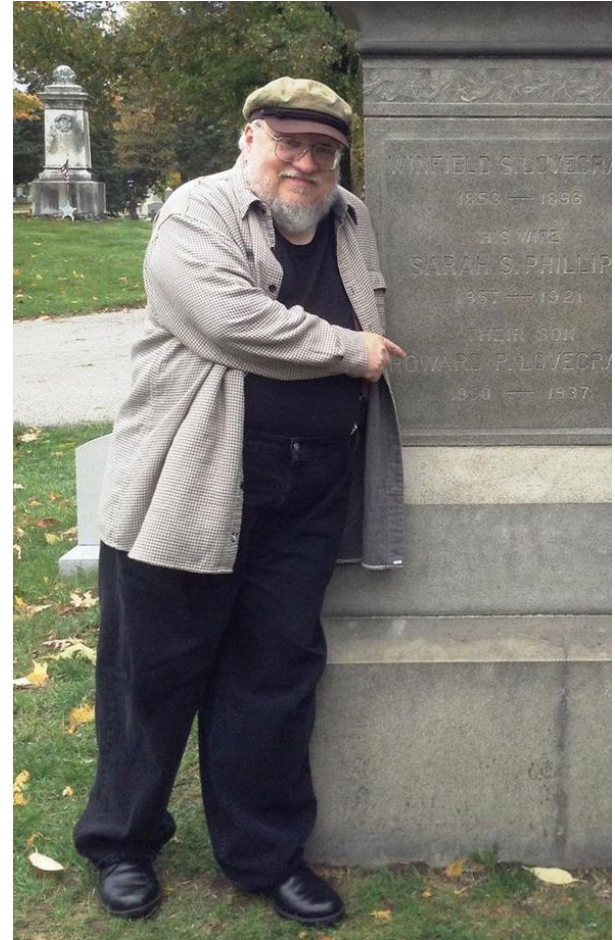


Lin Carter

Wrote lots of Conan stories in the 60s, and was one of GRRM's editors and friends

George RR Martin

- Grew up reading Lovecraft stories
- Also grew up reading Conan
- Lin Carter was his first editor
- Ramsey Campbell was a collaborator and friend, who famously wrote horror. Campbell wrote lots of Mythos tales with Derleth early in his career
- GRRM is a huge fan of the Mythos, and is close to some of its well-known writers



Lovecraft influences on ASOIAF

- The World of Ice and Fire
- Main story
- Characters
- Gods
- Places

Characters inspired by the Mythos

- Bran
- Euron
- Squishers
- Merlings
- Deep Ones
- Yellow King
- Lo Tho (Lo the Longspoon)
- The Shepherd God
- The Shepherd
- People of the Thousand Islands
- The Bloodstone Emperor
- People of the Isle of Toads

Lovecraft Gods in ASOIAF

Hastur the Shepherd God

Shub-Niggurath

The Drowned God

Tsathoggua

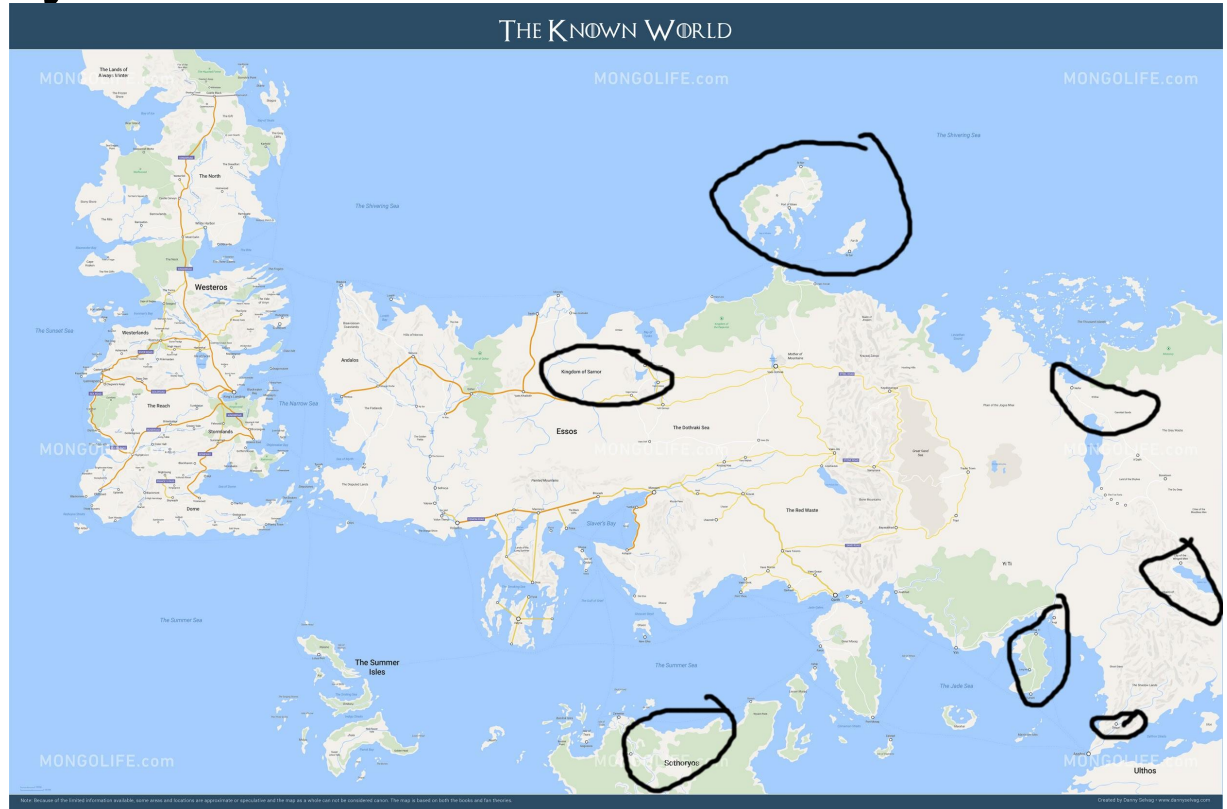
The Faceless God

Spider Goddess and Serpent God (Lyber)



Mythos geography in ASOIAF

- Carcosa
- Leng
- Sothoryos
- Stygai
- Ib
- Sarnar
- N'Ghai
- K'Dath
- City of Winged Men



Valyrian colonies, founded by religious heretics

- **Norvos**

- Founded after a religious schism in Valyria
- Worship the “true god”, whose name is only revealed to believers
- The Valyrians were originally shepherds
- Hastur, originally a god of shepherds, is also known as Hastur the Unspeakable



- **Qohor**

- Founded in defiance of the Valyrian religious tolerance
- Worship The Black Goat
- The Black Goat is Shub-Niggurath, The Black Goat of the Woods



- **Lorath**

- Worship Boath, the Blind God
- The Outer God Azathoth is known as the Blind Idiot God
- Worshippers of the Blind God were eventually replaced as leaders



The Iron Men, the Drowned God, and Deep Ones

“That is not dead which can eternal lie,
And with strange aeons even death may die.”

Dagon

Deep Ones

Cthulhu?



The Bloodstone Emperor

Founder of the Church of Starry Wisdom

Worshiped a black stone that fell from the sky

The Shining Trapezohedren

Invoked the Lion of Night

Nyarlatotep?



Questions?